AVENGERS · X-MEN

AXIS™

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AXIS

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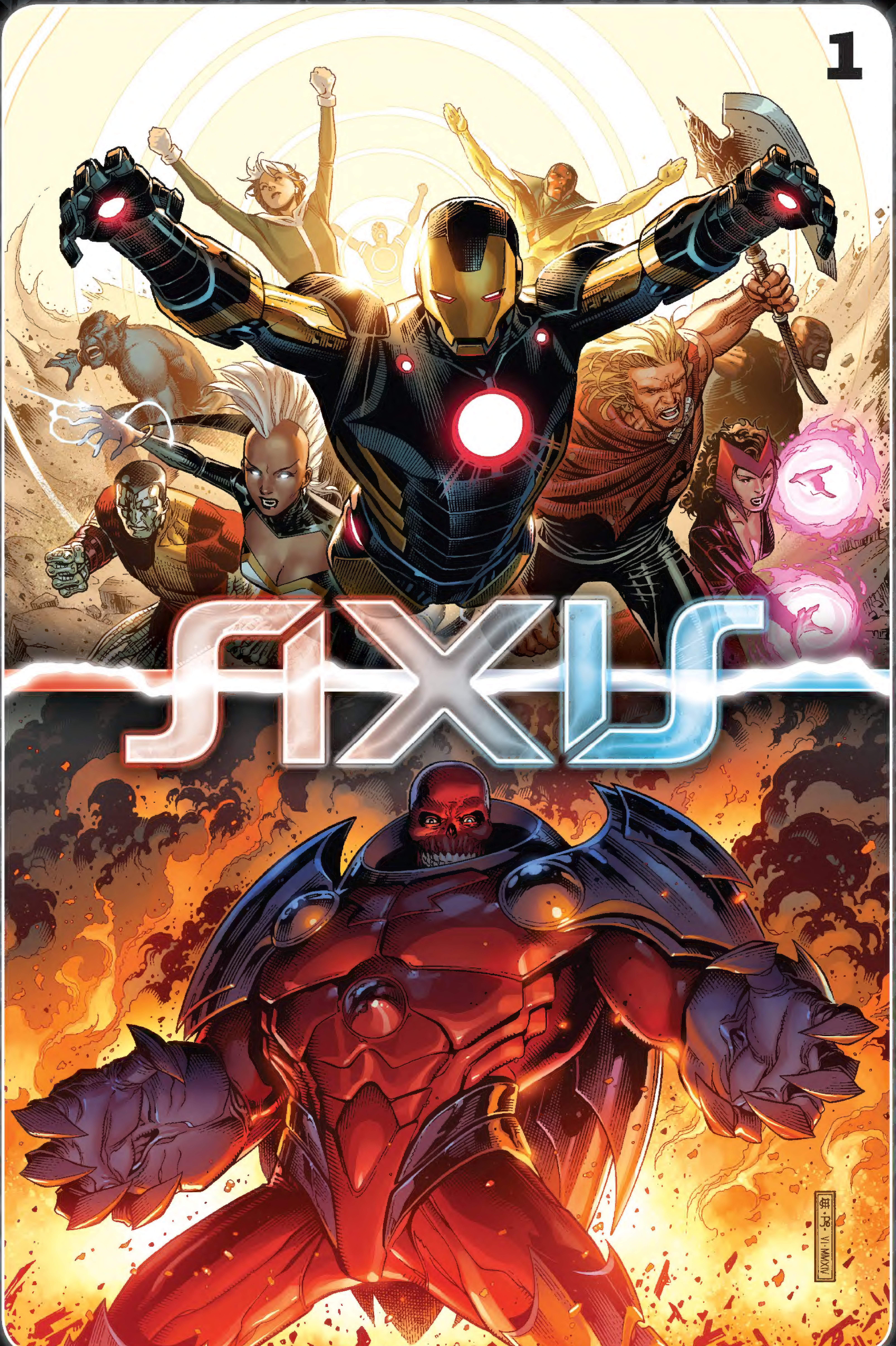
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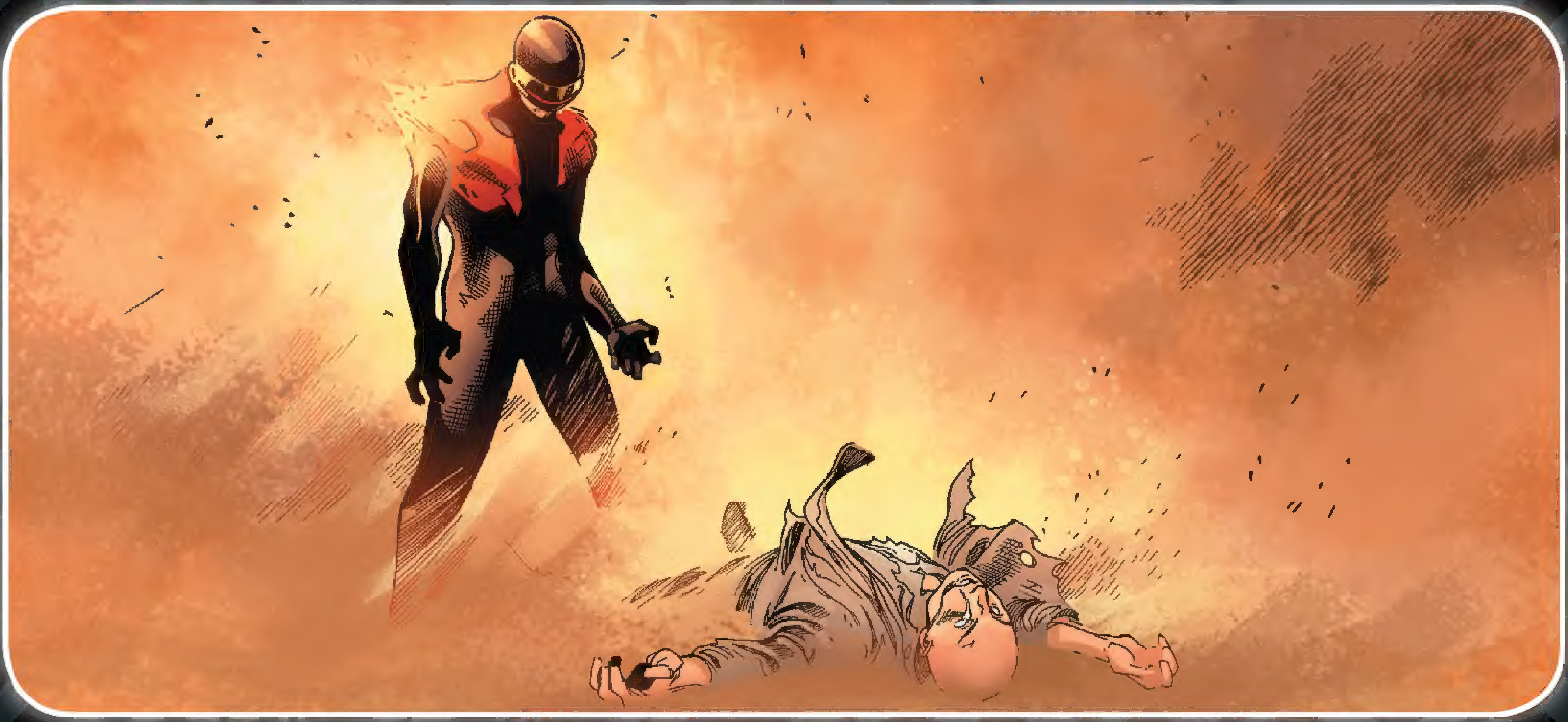
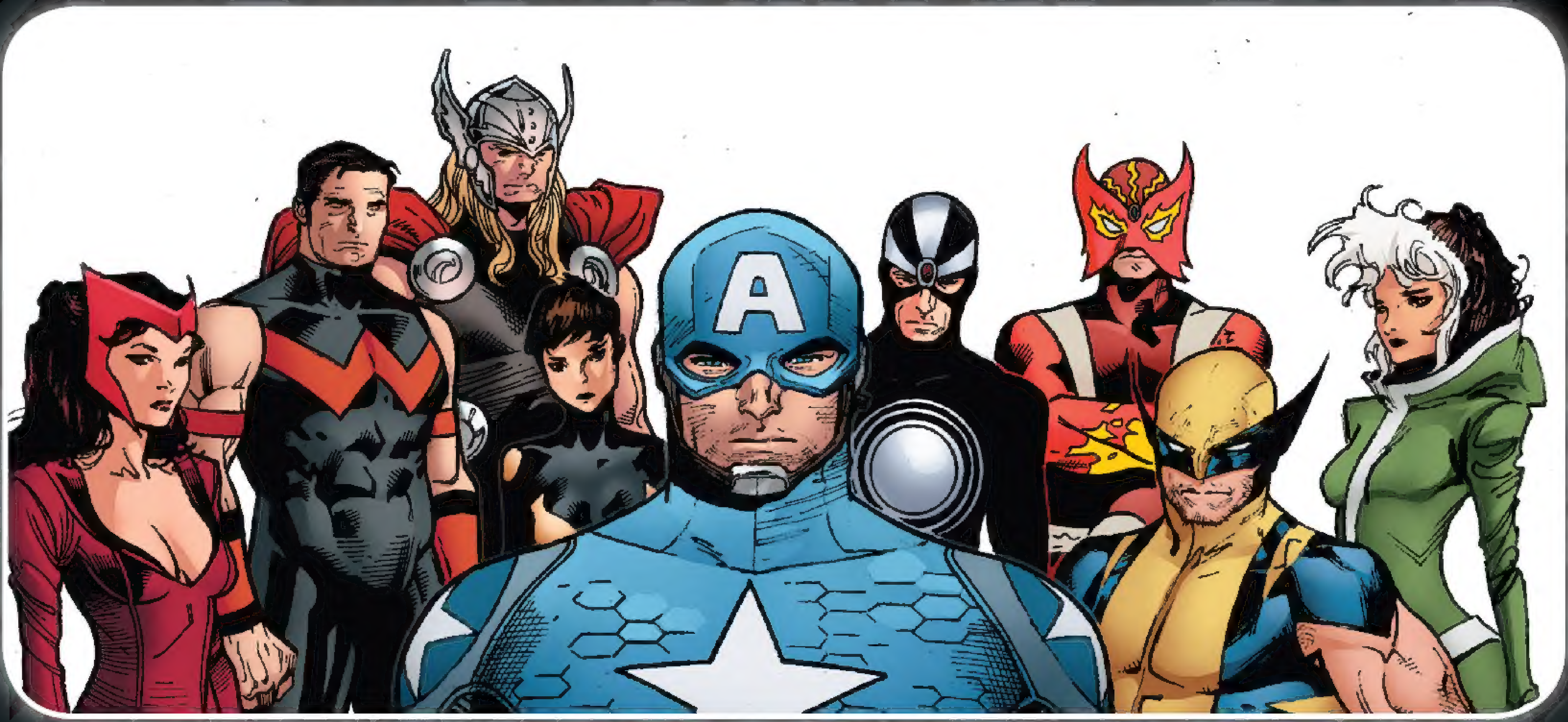
PREVIOUSLY...

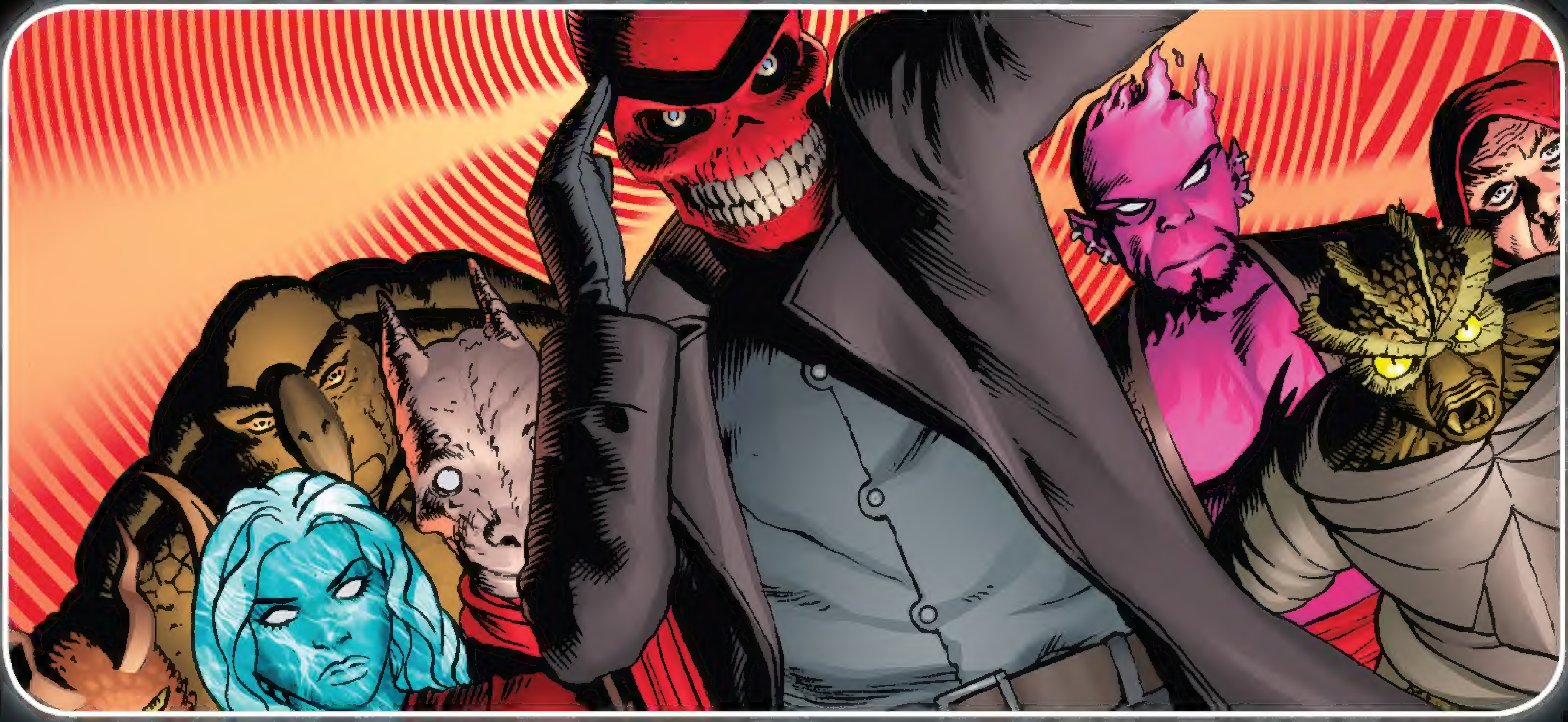
Overcome by the influence of the cosmic Phoenix entity, longtime X-Man Cyclops killed his mentor, Professor Charles Xavier, rendering him an outlaw to humanity and his fellow X-Men alike.



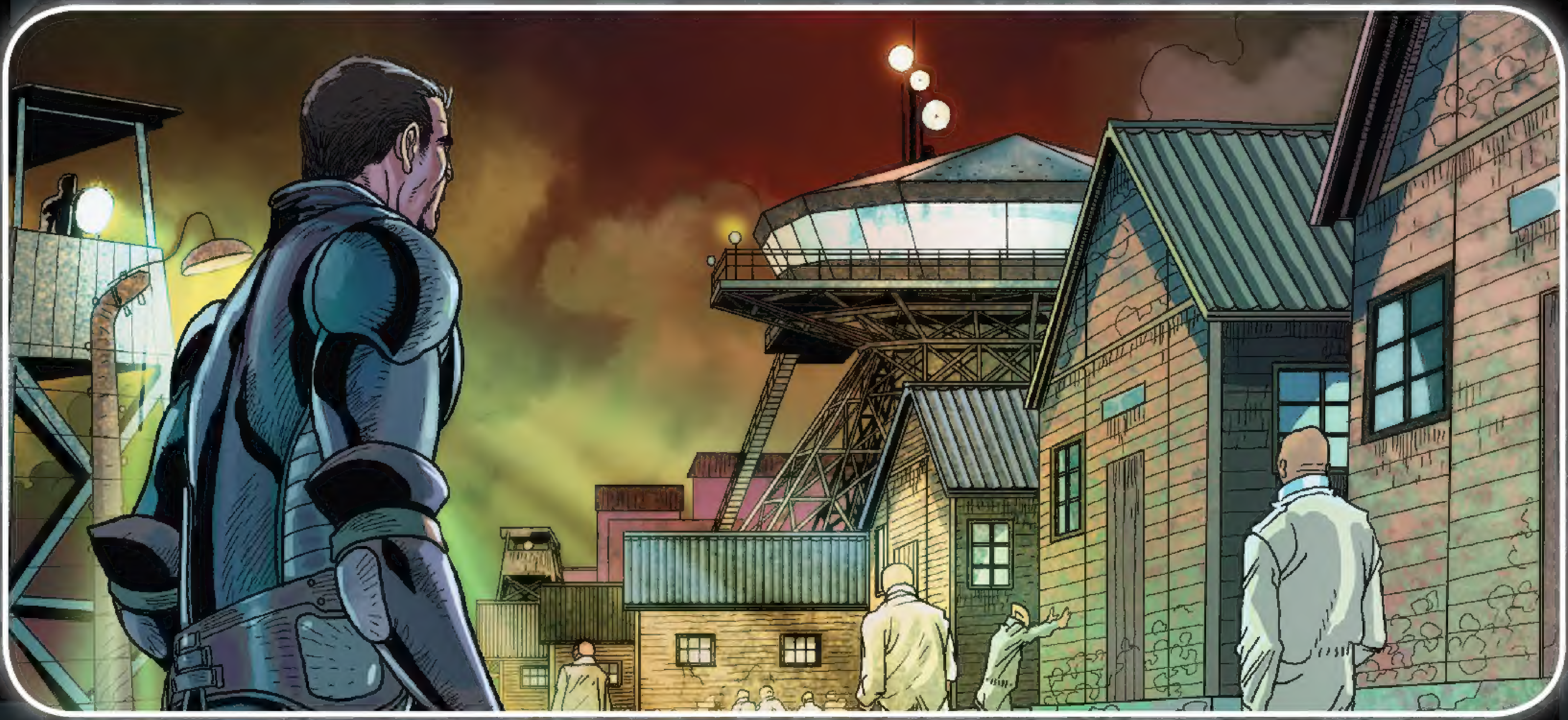
In the wake of Xavier's death, Captain America recruited veteran X-Man Havok to form a team of Avengers to demonstrate to the world that humans and mutants can work together.



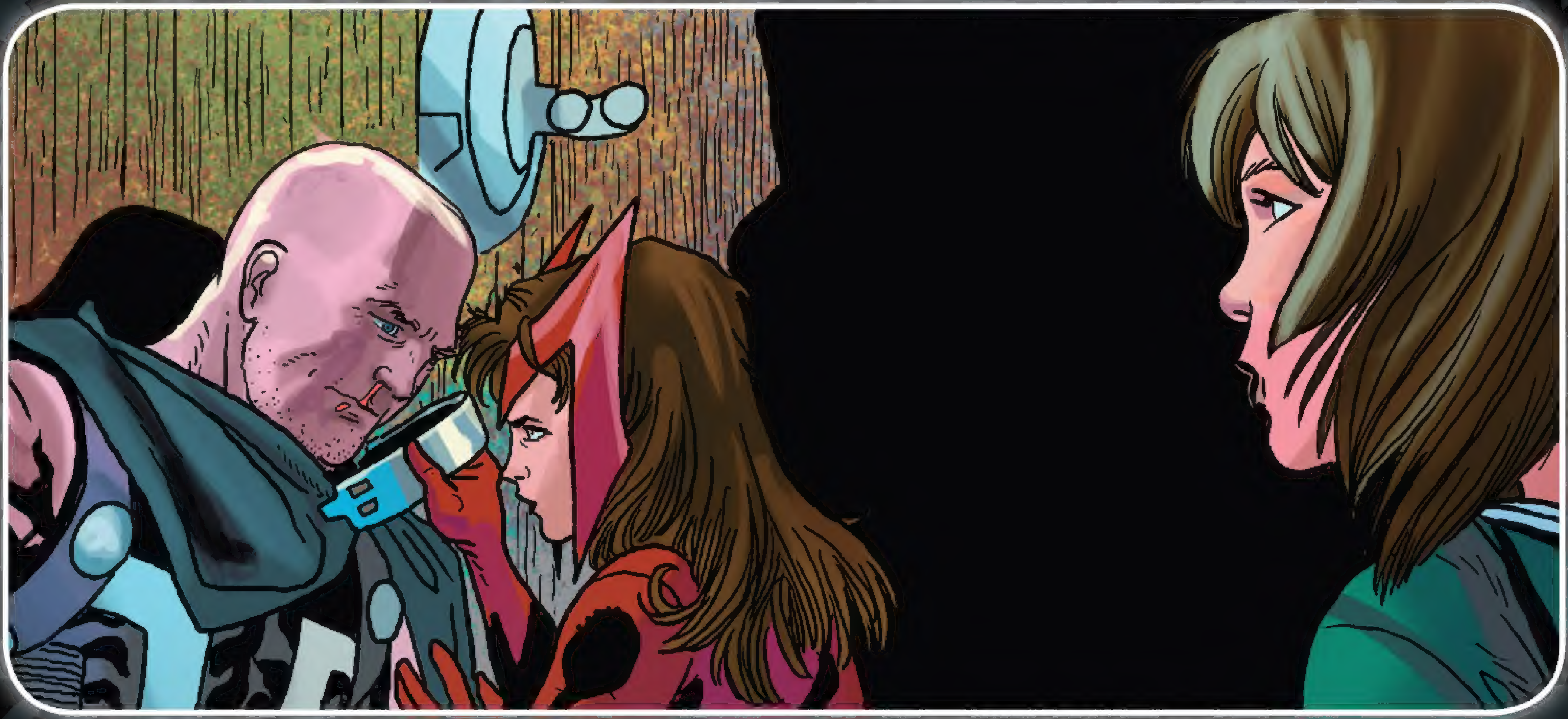
The Avengers Unity Squad's mission was immediately put to the test when the villainous Red Skull—in possession of Xavier's brain and the immense psychic powers that come with it—sought to incite war between man and mutant, aiming to rid Earth of mutantkind once and for all.



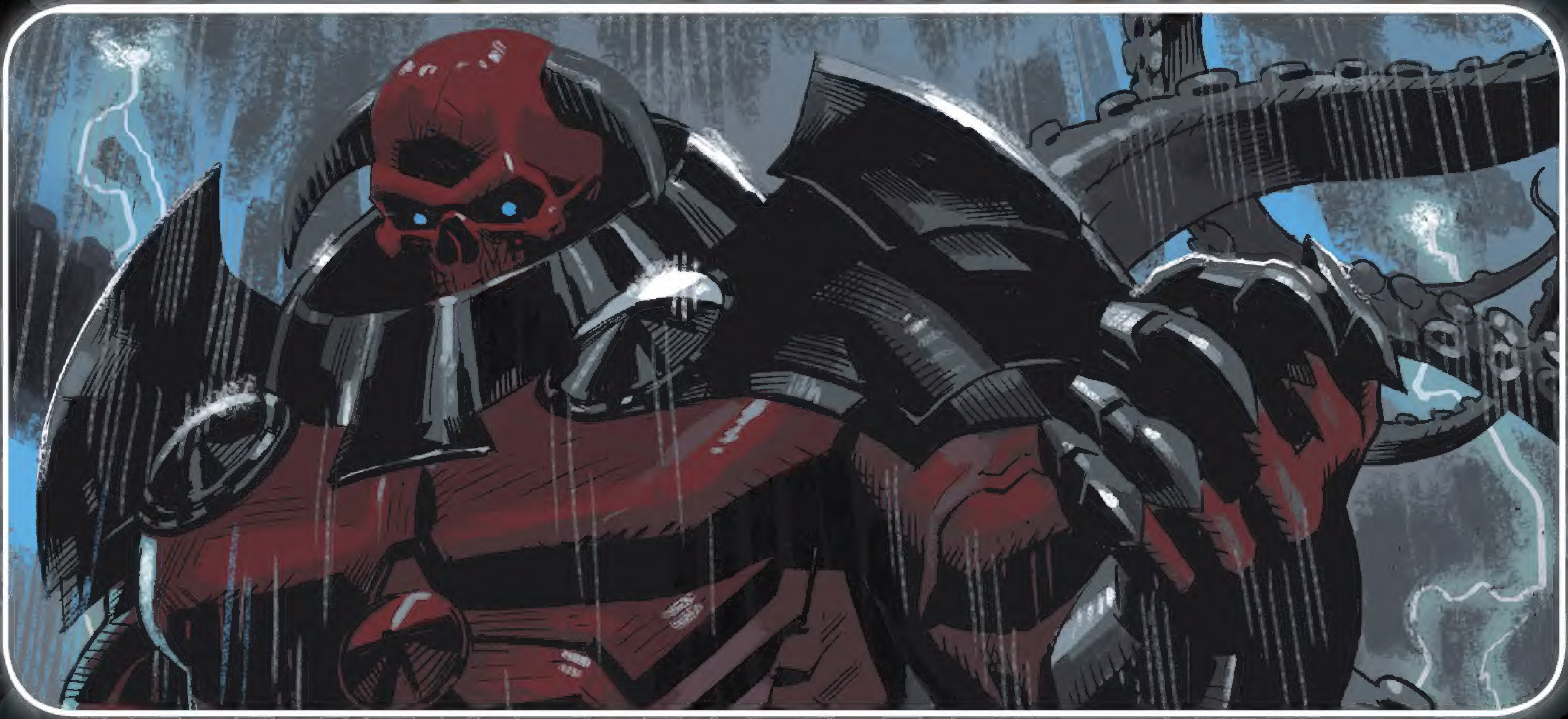
Though the Avengers defeated the Red Skull, he managed to escape. In the months that followed, the Skull continued to carry out his plan, revisiting familiar Nazi tactics and collecting mutants, imprisoning them in a reeducation camp he created on the abandoned island of Genosha.



Taken captive at the Red Skull's camp, Avengers Havok, Rogue and Scarlet Witch quickly freed themselves, as well as mutant terrorist Magneto, who had been captured while investigating the camp over the course of his one man war on those who would do harm to mutantkind.



Hellbent on completing his mission, Magneto viciously murdered the Red Skull against the Avengers' wishes. But the act backfired and in an explosion of psychic energy, the Red Skull was reborn in a terrifying new form: the Red Onslaught.



• CAST •

RED ONSLAUGHT

AHAB

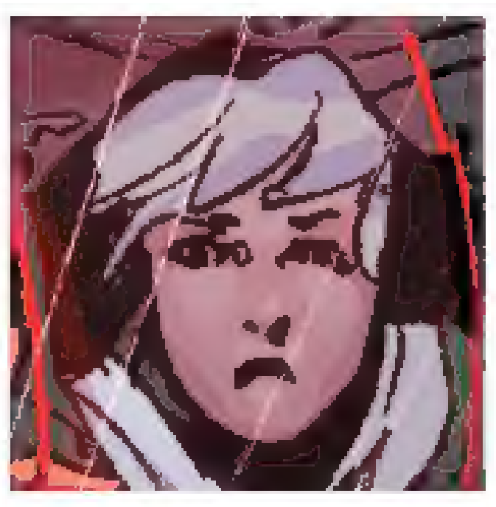
UNCANNY AVENGERS

UNITY SQUAD

WASP

SUNFIRE

SCARLET WITCH


ROGUE

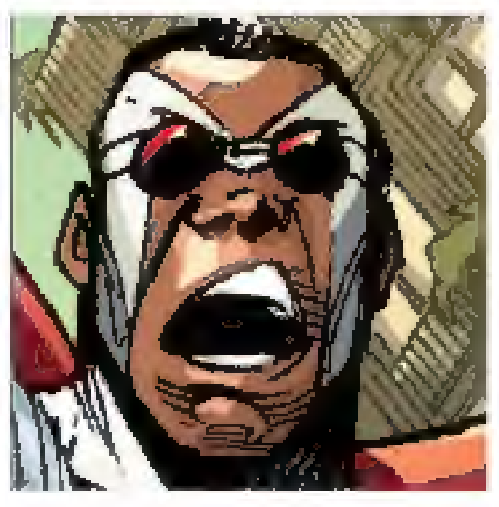
HAVOK

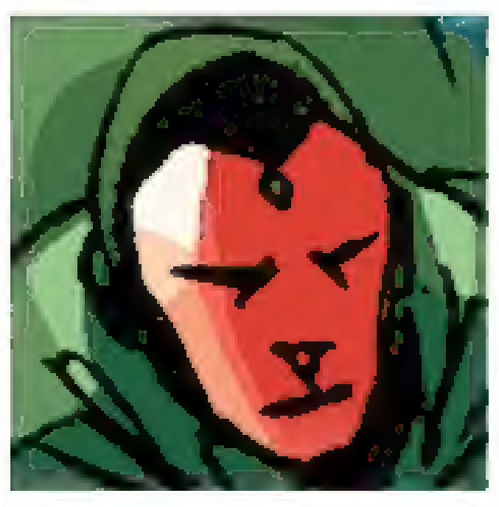
THOR

STEVE ROGERS

AVENGERS

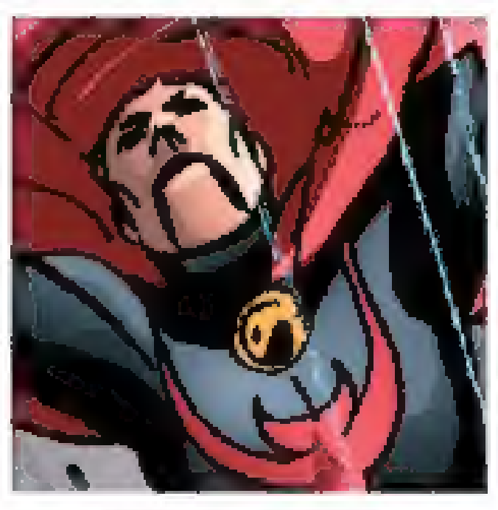
IRON MAN


CAPTAIN AMERICA

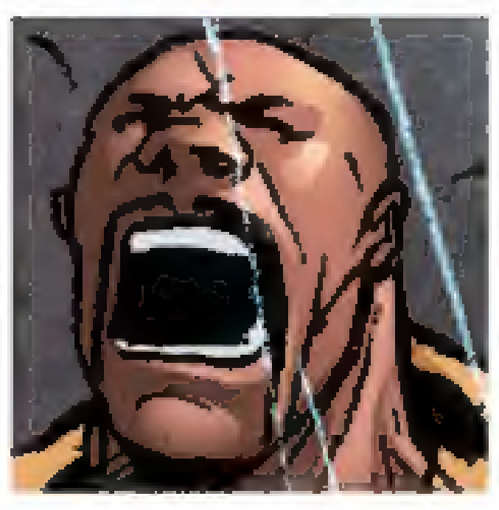

VISION

HULK

HAWKEYE


DOCTOR STRANGE

BLACK WIDOW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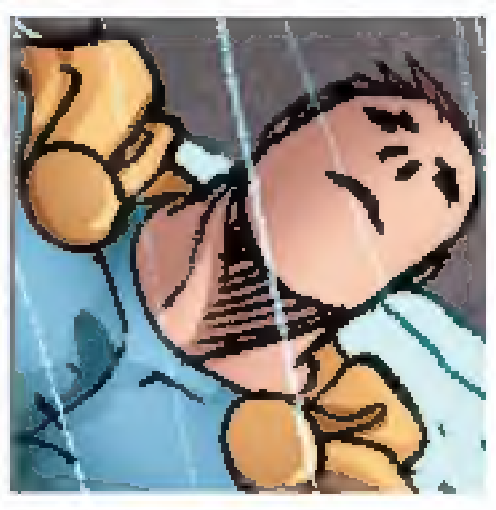
SUNSPOT

CANNONBALL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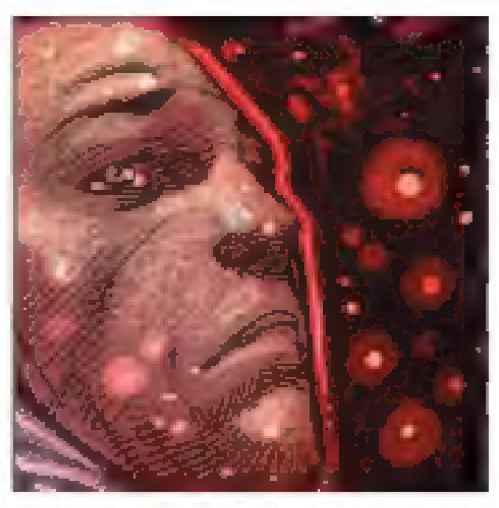
X-MEN


PROFESSOR X
DECEASED

CYCLOPS

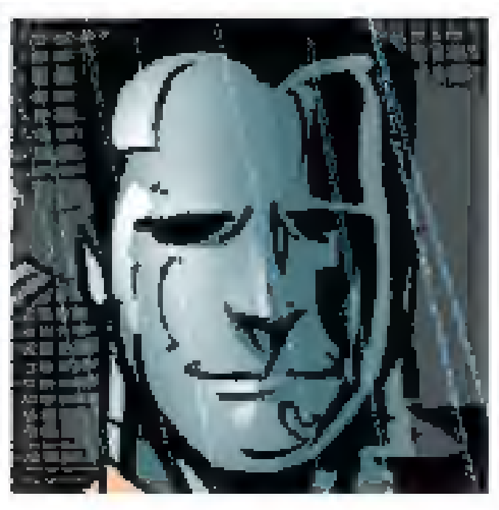
MAGNETO

QUENTIN QUIRE

GENESIS

STORM

NIGHTCRAWLER


COLOSSUS

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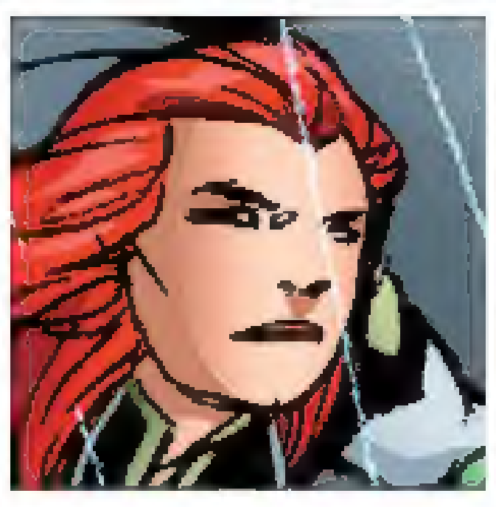
BEAST

ICEMAN

PSYLOCKE

KITTY PRYDE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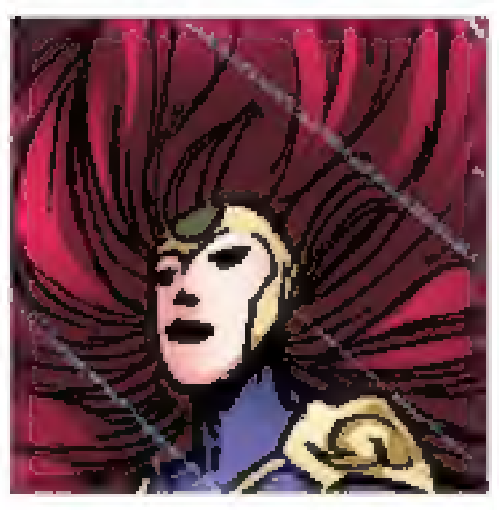
NOMAD


MEDUSA

NOVA

IRON FIST

INVISIBLE WOMAN

LOS ANGELES.
MAN, THEY'VE REALLY LET L.A. GO.
PERMITTING ONE'S LAWN TO GET THIS OVERGROWN IN MAN-EATING VEGETATION IS REALLY BREAKING A SOCIAL CONTRACT.
BIT OF AN IMPROVEMENT ACTUALLY.
I'M DETECTING SENTIENCE AND RAGE FROM ALL PLANTS IN THE REGION.
ASSUME ANYTHING GREEN IS YOUR ENEMY, AVENGERS.
EVEN KALE?!
ESPECIALLY KALE.
WHAT OF DOC GREEN?
I'M A CARNIVORE--JUST GREEN ON THE OUTSIDE--I DON'T EVEN ACKNOWLEDGE VEGETABLES.
THIS IS GOING TO WREAK HAVOC ON THE CURRENT SEASON OF REAL HOUSEWIVES.
SO, BLACK WIDOW VOTES TO LEAVE THINGS AS THEY ARE.
DO WE HAVE ANY IDEA WHO DID THIS, IRON MAN?
WELL, GEEZ, LET'S SEE, CAP...
AN ABUNDANCE OF PLANT LIFE CONSUMING THE WORLD OF MAN, PROBABLY IN SOME SORT OF A SYMBOLIC BID AT REVENGE...
I'M GUESSING THIS IS THE WORK OF POLLUTION MAN OR JOHNNY TREE-HATER.
YEAH, OR MAYBE IVAN THE INDUSTRIALIST--YOU KNOW, SOMEBODY WHO REALLY HATES PLANTS.
I APPRECIATE THE THOUGHT YOU'VE PUT INTO UNRAVELING THIS MYSTERY, TONY, HOWEVER YOU MIGHT BE A SMIDGEN OFF-BASE.
I'M ALL EARS, VISION.
AND NO ONE SAYS "SMIDGEN" ANYMORE.
YES, WELL, PERHAPS THE INDIVIDUAL BEHIND THIS DOESN'T HATE TREES AT ALL, BUT IS QUITE PARTIAL TO THEM.
POTENTIALLY SOMEONE SUCH AS--

PLANTMAN WILL SUFFER MANKIND'S PUTRID CORRUPTION NO LONGER, AVENGERS!
OH, RIGHT-- DUH.
CANCEL MY APPEARANCE ON JEOPARDY.
WITNESS THE PRICE OF YOUR DECADENCE, TONY STARK--
--THE GREAT POLLUTER!
FACT-CHECK FRIDAY--I HAVE AN EXEMPLARY CLEAN ENERGY RECORD.
NOT THAT I NEED TO EXPLAIN MYSELF TO YOU--
--BUT MY P.R. GUY CHIP ISN'T HERE AND HE LIKES ME TO MAINTAIN A CERTAIN IMAGE.
WHILE THE WORLD ROTS, THE GREAT IRON MAN FIXATES ON HIS VANITY!
WOW, THAT WAS CHIP'S EXACT ADVICE.
GAZK GAZK GAZK
WASP! EAR BLAST HIM--A DESTROYED EQUILIBRIUM IS OUR BEST CHANCE TO SHUT DOWN SEYMOUR'S LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS.
THOR, WE'VE GOT PEOPLE IN THOSE BUILDINGS--HACK THE PLANTS OFF BEFORE THEY COLLAPSE--
THOR WILL NOT CLEAN WEEDS WHILE THERE IS BATTLE TO BE HAD!
IF YOU DESIRE GARDENING DONE--DO IT YOURSELF, LITTLE BIRD.
I RECOGNIZE THAT THOR ISN'T SMART ENOUGH TO UNDERSTAND MY TACTICS, BUT THAT'S WHY THOR DOESN'T LEAD THE AVENGERS.
THOR PUNCHES BIG STUFF AND DOES AS HE'S INSTRUCTED--

KWUNGG
Right on one count.
HE DOESN'T RESPECT YOU.
OKAY--WHAT?
HE IMPERILS YOU ALL TO PLACATE HIS PRIDE.
EGOTISTICAL FOOL.
I HAVE HAD ENOUGH.
BAH! I FEAR YOU NOT, HOLLOW MAN MADE OF TIN--
DHOOOOOOM
YOU HAVE FORGOTTEN WHOM YOU ARE SPEAKING TO.
WAS THAT THOR?
ARE YOU BLIND AND DEAF?!
IDIOT--WE'RE GOING DOWN!
EJECT--!
"--SO I CAN KILL YOU WITH MY OWN HANDS!"
YOU'VE BETRAYED YOURSELF LONG ENOUGH.
I WILL SUFFER YOU FASCISTS NO LONGER!
FWOOOOSH
TWUNGG
HE USURPS YOUR AUTHORITY.
I SURE AS HELL DON'T NEED A ROBOT DOING MY FIGHTING!
ARE--ARE YOU PEOPLE INSANE?!
WHILE YOU PRIMATES FIGHT EACH OTHER, I'VE CALLED FORTH A TSUNAMI OF SWEET GREEN!
I WILL OVERWHELM THE SQUALID CITIES OF MEN, SAVING THE UNSULLIED PLANT LIFE--
MAN, I HATE TO DO THIS RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE--
--BUT I'M GOING TO HAVE TO RAIN-CHECK THE SHRUBBERY RANT.
GAZK
GAZK
ZIK
ZAK
ZOP
GHRAHH--
OKAY, BAD GUY'S DOWN AND HOPEFULLY SO IS WHATEVER RAGE PHEROMONE HE'S BEEN EMITTING, BECAUSE, FRANKLY...
...I'M A LITTLE TIRED OF ALL THE HERO-ON-HERO ACTION AROUND HERE.
WHADDA YA SAY, AVENGERS?
I TRUST EVERYONE IS FEELING A SMIDGEN MORE ASSEMBLE-Y...?
OH.
I'VE MADE A HUGE MISTAKE.

YOU DID THIS TO ME!
YOU KNOW THE TRUTH NOW--
HE'S THE ONE WHO CURSED YOU TO THIS EXISTENCE.
DOOOOOOM
ARMOR INTEGRITY COMPROMISED.
OKAY, HULK'S STILL VERY ANGRY, SO IT'S NOT PLANT-MAN'S PHEROMONES, AND IT'S NOT AFFECTING ME-- WHICH LEAVES TELEPATHY.
SUDDENLY VERY GLAD FOR THOSE NIGHTMARES THAT LED TO MY INSTALLING A TELEPATHIC INHIBITOR.
YOU THINK I'M GOING TO FORGET WHAT YOU DID?!
JUST ONE SEC, HULK...
OKAY, DUPLICATE TELEPATHIC FREQUENCY, INVERT, AND WE SHOULD HAVE A--
ARMOR INTEGRITY COMPROMISED.
EVERYTHING, ALL OF MY PAIN--THIS IS YOUR FAULT, STARK!
KRRUNCHH
ARMOR INTEGRITY COMPROMISED--
--IGNORE THE RAGE MONSTER--FIND THE PERFECT INVERTED FREQUENCY AND--
COLLAPSE IS--
BBBRRRRUUROOOM
"--SAVE THE DAY."
HOW WE FEELING, BUDDY?
A SMIDGEN LESS IRRITATED?
I MEAN, I KNOW IT'S RELATIVE...
I... I'M...
I'M SORRY.
WOW. SORRY EVEN?
OKAY. MY BRILLIANT TELEPATHIC INVERTER DEFINITELY WORKED.
FOR TELEPATHY TO AFFECT ME, IT WOULD HAVE TO BE INCREDIBLY POWERFUL...
TONY, YOU THERE?
YEAH, STEVE, I'M HERE. BOY, YOU REALLY MISSED SOME FUN.
DOWNSIDE OF BEING A SENIOR CITIZEN, I'M AFRAID.
BUT, HEY, LOOK ON THE UPSIDE--CHEAP BUS FARE.
TONY, LISTEN TO ME! WE'RE DEALING WITH--

A TELEPATHIC BROADCAST. I KNOW.
ALREADY PLANTING A DISRUPTOR TO BLANKET THE AREA UNTIL WE FIND ITS SOURCE AND--
NO, IT'S NOT JUST LOS ANGELES...
AVENGERS MANSION.
...IT'S THE ENTIRE WORLD, TONY.
IT'S EVERYWHERE.
WHAT?
ONE MINUTE AGO EVERY CITY ON EARTH ERUPTED IN HATE RIOTS.
THE ONLY TIME I'VE SEEN TELEPATHY REMOTELY THIS POWERFUL...
DEAR GOD...
WHAT? WHO IS THE MYSTERY CONTESTANT, STEVE?
THE ONE PERSON WITH THIS MUCH HATE AND THE POWER TO SPREAD IT...
"...GET BACK HERE AS SOON AS YOU CAN."
I'M NOT FACEDOWN IN THE MUD OF A GENOSHAN REEDUCATION CAMP.
I'M IN BED WITH JANET.
KATIE SNUCK IN DURING THE NIGHT--
RASCAL.
KICKING OFF THE COVERS--ALWAYS WAKES ME UP.
MAGNUS--W-WHAT DID YOU DO?
NOTHING, ANGEL--YOU'RE DREAMING.
WE'RE NOT THERE. MAGNETO ISN'T OUR PROBLEM.
HE WAS MY PROBLEM, HAVOK...
...ANOTHER THING LEFT UNFINISHED.
PROFESSOR X?!
RISE, ALEX.
YOU ARE NEEDED.
DO NOT ALLOW HIS HATRED TO BE MY LEGACY. PLEASE--
KATIE--?!
SHE NEVER EXISTED.
THE MONSTERS TOOK HER FROM YOU.
BUT I'LL STOP THEM--AND YOU'LL HELP ME.
I SEE IN YOUR HEART YOU WELCOME THE CLEANSING--
OPEN YOUR EYES.
REALITY SNAPS BACK LIKE STEEL CABLE--
NO BED--
--NO JANET--
--NO KATIE--
GENOSHA--RED SKULL'S REEDUCATION CAMPS.
HE'S TURNING THE MUTANTS INTO AN ARMY...WIPING THEIR MINDS.
A WAR YOU NEVER WANTED ANY PART OF.
FIGHTING TO UNITE TWO SIDES THAT DIDN'T WANT TO BE UNITED--
WHAT DID YOU GIVE UP TO PROTECT THESE CATTLE?
EVERYTHING.
WHAT WILL BE THE COST NEXT TIME?
I'VE LET THEM EXPLOIT ME FOR TOO LONG, BUT NOW I KNOW--
--THE RED SKULL IS RIGHT.
ONLY ONE WAY THROUGH IT...

LET THE HATE SET ME FREE.
FAILED TO STOP THE RED SKULL FROM TAKING XAVIER'S GIFTS.
FAILED TO UNITE THE AVENGERS AND THE X-MEN IN TIME TO HUNT HIM DOWN.
FAILED TO STOP MAGNETO FROM KILLING THE RED SKULL.
AND NOW IT'S UP TO ME--
I HAVE TO *KILL* THEM *BOTH*.
BEHOLD THE LEGACY OF YOUR BLOODLUST, MAGNETO!
IN KILLING ME, YOU HAVE RELEASED ALL THAT STIRRED WITHIN ME-- ***SUCH GLORIOUS LIBERATION!***
I WILL FINALLY SEE MY WORLD ACHIEVED-- THE NEW MASTER RACE WILL TEAR DOWN THIS WORLD AND DRAW FORTH **THE REICH ETERNAL!**
NOW!
STRIKE WITH EVERYTHING YOU HAVE!
I KNOW THIS ANIMAL WELL AND IF WE DO NOT KILL RED ONSLAUGHT RIGHT NOW--

WE WILL ALL BE DEAD TOMORROW

THE RED SUPREMACY: CHAPTER 1

SUCH LUMINOUS THINGS--SO CONCERNED FOR THE WORLD!
SO CONCERNED FOR THE POOR, HELPLESS HUMANS.
IF YOU'RE SO DAMNED ALMIGHTY POWERFUL, WANDA, THEN DO SOMETHIN', USELESS COW!
YOU'RE LETTING HIS HATE TAKE YOU, ROGUE--YOU HAVE TO FIGHT IT.
IT IS NOT MY HATE THAT YOU FEEL--IT IS THAT WITHIN ROGUE SET FREE!
AIM IT ALL AT HIM! ATTACK!
STOP.
LISTEN.
TELL ME, WANDA, BEFORE YOUR FATHER CRUSHED MY SKULL--
WHAT WERE YOU THINKING?
YOU COULD HAVE STOPPED HIM--BUT YOU DIDN'T.
OPEN YOUR MIND.
THE HARSH LESSONS OF YOUR LIFE HAVE CREATED A CALLOUSED PRAGMATIST.
LOST CHILDREN, DIVORCE--MADNESS.
YET HERE YOU ARE, FIGHTING THE SAME FIGHT, EXPECTING DIFFERENT RESULTS.
LET ME IN.
YOU SEE MANKIND AS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY, FRÄULEIN?
IF YOU TRULY CARE FOR THEM--HELP ME CREATE A BETTER WORLD!
ONE WITHOUT THIS CEASELESS SUPERHUMAN CONFLICT!
GIVE YOURSELF FREELY.
I GIVE MYSELF TO YOU.

YERAGHH--
SHLK
SKK
RUKK
YOU NAZIS SPEWED THE SAME *FILTH* DURING YOUR *LAST* WAR--
AND THIS ONE WILL END NO DIFFERENTLY.
YOU-- *YOU DAMN MURDERING HYPOCRITE!*
YOU'RE JUST LIKE HIM, MAGNETO!
I'VE SEEN FIRSTHAND WHAT YOU DO WITH *POWER--*
ZAKROOOM
--YOU HUNTED MY FAMILY LIKE DOGS!
TROOM
DWOOOM
OOF--!
KWOOK
MY GOD...
THE WORLD HAS GONE MAD.
GOD'S GOT *NOTHING* TO DO WITH THIS. OR *ANYTHING,* REALLY.

BECAUSE, YOU KNOW, HE'S NOT REAL.
WHICH I KNOW BECAUSE HE LETS THIS SORT OF THING HAPPEN.
QUENTIN QUIRE, CYCLOPS... THE CHILD APOCALYPSE.
GENESIS, IF YOU DON'T MIND.
ERIK...WHAT THE HELL IS GOING ON OUT THERE?!
WHERE ARE WE?!
WE ARE IN THE RED SKULL'S MUTANT REEDUCATION CAMP, X-MEN.
XAVIER'S WORST FEARS COME TRUE.
BUT THAT ISN'T THE WORST OF IT--
THE GHOULISH FIEND STOLE CHARLES'S CORPSE--USED HIM--TOOK HIS GIFTS--
THEY'VE BONDED, CYCLOPS.
AND NOW THEY'VE GIVEN BIRTH TO A RED ONSLAUGHT--
WHERE IS HE?
THERE WILL BE TIME FOR FIGHTING ONCE WE'VE EVACUATED THE CAPTIVES OFF THIS GOD-FORSAKEN--
WHERE IS RED SKULL?!
HE'S DEAD!
DIDN'T MAGNETO TELL YOU?
HE KILLED THE SKULL...

JUST LIKE YOU KILLED XAVIER!
OOF--!
KRESHH
SHOKK
THIS IS *YOUR* FAULT, SCOTT!
YOU'RE MAGNETO'S *TRUE* DISCIPLE!
CREATED THE PERFECT RECIPE FOR HATE!
SHOKK
YOU DON'T CARE WHAT IT COSTS THE *REST--OOF!*
ZAKOOOM
IF YOU *LOVE* XAVIER, IF YOU *FIGHT* FOR HIS MEMORY--

--WHY DON'T YOU DO A *SINGLE THING* HE TAUGHT YOU?
YOU WERE SUPPOSED TO LEAD THE FIGHT FOR COHABITATION.
ALL I'VE SEEN SINCE XAVIER DIED IS LINES DRAWN IN THE SAND, AND PEOPLE SCREAMING AT EACH OTHER OVER NOTHING!
THIS ISN'T WHAT *HE'D* WANT.
ESPECIALLY FROM YOU TW--
UGH--
SHLUKK
OH...
DON'T MATTER MUCH WHAT XAVIER'D HAVE WANTED, BOY--HE'S DEAD--
TRUST ME, OL' AHAB HAS HUNTED THEM THROUGHOUT HISTORY--I KNOW A THING OR TWO.
AND ALL THESE TWO EVER DID WAS PAY HIS *"TEACHINGS"* LIP SERVICE.
TALKING'S EASY, *AIN'T IT,* BOYS?
RUNNING YOUR GOBS!
EVAN!
THE PEACEFUL ROAD'S JUST TOO DAMN HARD, *ISN'T THAT RIGHT?*
MUST BE, BECAUSE WHEN *PUSH* COMES TO *SHOVE--*

"--YOU PULL YOUR *GUNS* LIKE ALL THE REST."
AVENGERS TOWER.
I'M SENDING SPIDER-MAN AND A TEAM TO STOP THE RIOTING HERE IN MIDTOWN--
--INTERNATIONAL HEROES ARE FIGHTING ALL OVER TO HOLD THINGS TOGETHER, BUT IT'S A STOPGAP--
THE WORLD IS *CRUMBLING.*
STEVE, EVERY NUCLEAR POWER ON EARTH IS PREPARING TO DEPLOY WARHEADS.
WE HAVE TO DO *SOMETHING.*
I'M KEEPING THE HATE BROADCAST BLOCKED HERE, BUT IT WOULD TAKE ME DAYS TO REPLICATE THIS WORLDWIDE.
THERE MIGHT NOT BE A *WORLD* IN A COUPLE OF DAYS, TONY.
WELL, THAT'S A ROSY APPRAISAL, CAPTAIN OPTIMISM.
I'M SCOURING THE EARTH FOR THE SOURCE--ONCE A BIG ENOUGH BURST EMERGES, WE'LL HAVE SKULL'S LOCATION.
IN THE MEANTIME WE'VE DEPLOYED EVERYONE WE COULD GRAB TO KEEP THE PEACE.
SO WE WAIT HERE, READY TO MOVE THE SECOND WE FIND THE SOURCE.
HEY, JAN.
YOU OKAY?
ALEX HAS BEEN M.I.A. FOR DAYS.
CAN'T HELP THINKING SOMETHING TERRIBLE HAS HAPPENED.
HAVOK'S TOUGH AS NAILS. BET HE'S FINE.

WHY DO WE DO THIS? DESTROY OUR OWN LIVES IN THIS ENDLESS BATTLE?
SAVING THE EARTH, MOSTLY. I LIKE HAVING A PLACE TO LIVE.
BEEN TO OUTER SPACE.
DIDN'T LOVE IT.
WHY THE HORRIBLE INTROSPECTION NOW, JANET?
IT'S...
WE HAVEN'T REALLY TOLD ANYONE...
ALEX AND I HAD A *DAUGHTER*...IN THE FUTURE.
KATIE.
AFTER HIS MOTHER.
HAD...?
SHE WAS *ERASED*--TAKEN BY KANG.
SO WE COULD SAVE EVERYONE ELSE'S CHILDREN.
MY GOD, JANET.
WHY KEEP DOING THIS...
...WHEN IT COSTS US *SO MUCH?*

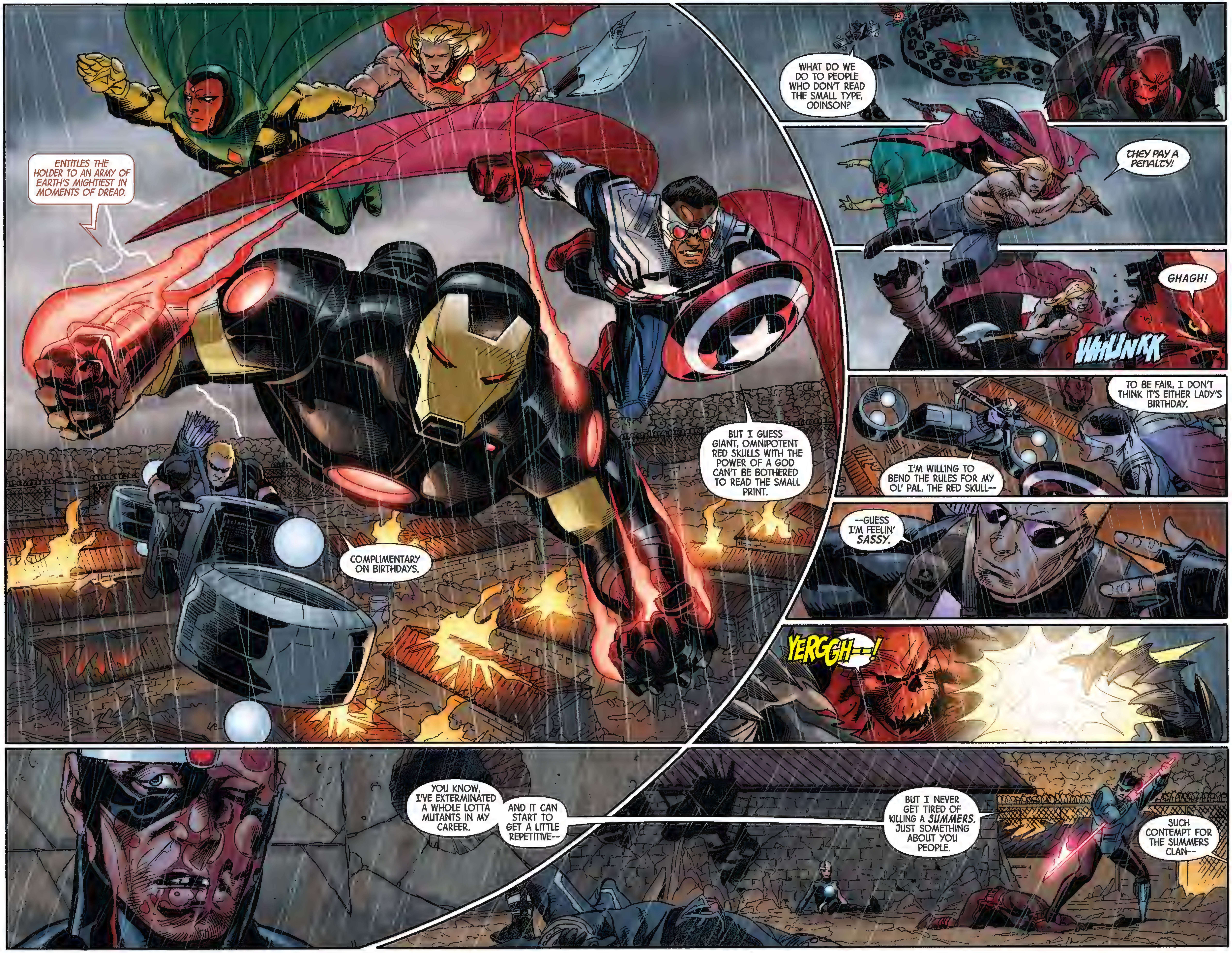
THERE THEY ARE-- THE INCANTATIONS INSIDE OF YOU, SWEET WANDA!
THE EQUATIONS OF REALITY ETCHED INTO YOUR SUBCONSCIOUS!
OPEN YOURSELF TO ME.
I AM YOURS, MY LOVE--MY TRUTH.
SUBMIT TO ME.
I HAVE.
WE ARE ONE.
YOUR LOATHING IS MINE.
FULFILL MY DESIRES.
PEEL AWAY THE FLIMSY PARCHMENT OF THIS FALSE WORLD!
YES--
--AN ONSLAUGHT AGAINST THIS WAKING LIE!
REALITY TEARS AWAY--REVEALING A NAZI NIGHTMARE--
--THE END OF EVERYTHING I LOVE.
HIS CACKLING LAUGH IN MY HEAD.
HE WANTS ME TO--
WATCH HER DO IT AGAIN.
--I WAS RIGHT TO FEAR HER--
SHE IS DANGEROUS-- YOU LET THIS HAPPEN.

NO--!
YOU WILL LOSE
HISTORY WILL BE REWRITTEN.
HIS MIND IS EVERYWHERE-- ONE WAY OUT--
ALL THAT WILL BE REMEMBERED OF THE X-MEN AND THE AVENGERS--
--IS THEY FAILED TO PREVENT IT FROM HAPPENING!
UNLESS WE DO.
IMBECILE--! WHAT ARE YOU--
JUST MAKIN' A LITTLE CONTACT--
--USING MAH GOD-GIVEN MUTANT ABILITIES TO ABSORB THE PSYCHE OF WHOEVER I TOUCH.
SHRUNK
BLACKNESS FOR A MILLION MILES.
AN ETERNITY OF ANGUISH--
--SCREAMS--
--CHERISHED MEMORIES OF THOUSANDS OF VICTIMS.
AND THE BRIGHTEST LIGHT I'VE EVER SEEN.
A GENTLE SOUL FIGHTING SKULL'S LEGACY OF BRUTALITY.
THERE ISN'T MUCH TIME LEFT FOR ME.
THE ONE MAN IN THE WORLD WHO EVER INSPIRED ME.
GAVE ME HOPE.
AND THIS CANNOT BE MY LEGACY.
SIR, ALL I'VE EVER WANTED IS FOR YOU TO SEE THE WORLD THE WAY YOU DREAMED IT...
I TRIED SO HARD...
AND NOW YOU ALONE MUST FACE THE MOST DANGEROUS ENEMY MANKIND HAS EVER KNOWN.
ONSLAUGHT IS NOT A LIVING CREATURE.
IT IS THE EMBODIMENT OF PURE HATRED GIVEN FORM.
DO NOT HESITATE-- WHATEVER MUST BE DONE--
--THIS NIGHTMARE MUST BE ENDED.
I'M SORRY IT FALLS TO YOU, ROGUE.
SORRY I COULDN'T STOP HIM.
THE TASK SEEMS IMPOSSIBLE, BUT OF ALL MY STUDENTS...

...I CANNOT IMAGINE ONE MORE CAPABLE.
HIS EVIL PERMEATES--
YOU WILL NOT TAKE HER FROM ME!
YOU WILL NOT STAND IN THE WAY OF THE REICH ETERNAL!
C'MON, GIRL-- CHARLES GAVE YOU SOME SMALL PIECE OF HIMSELF--
--USE IT--
--BLOCK SKULL'S MIND--
--AND GET HER AWAY FROM HIM.
TOGETHER WE WILL ENSLAVE THESE WRETCHES-- THE MUTANTS AND THEIR ILK WILL SERVE THEIR MASTERS!
NOW, WITCH-- FINISH IT!
GHRAGH--!
YOU DARE--?!
'FRAID SO.
SHLUMPP
UNNG--!
"WHAT A SAD MESS FOR YOU, ALEX--"

--SUCH PAIN!
DID HE TELL YOU ALL THAT HE SACRIFICED HIS OWN DAUGHTER?!
NOT TOO DIFFERENT FROM YOU, EH, MAGNUS?
SILENCE THIS CUR!
ZAAKK
HOW IT MUST HAUNT YOU, ALEX--WONDERING IF KANG HAS KATIE STILL.
IS SHE SAFE?
TWOKK
DID SHE DISAPPEAR WITH THE REST OF PLANET X?
AHAB, YOU SON OF A BITCH-- I'LL KILL YOU!
PART THAT MAKES ME HAPPIEST--
--SEEING YOU GO TO YOUR GRAVE NEVER KNOWING THE TRUTH!
ALEX--!
AH, YOU HAD TO MESS WITH THE PERFECT STAGE I'D SET. IT DOESN'T MATTER.
THEY KNOW WHAT YOU'VE DONE, ALEX--
GHRAGHH--!

"--AND THOSE KIND OF SINS CAST *LONG* SHADOWS."
C'MON, WE HAVE TO *GO*-- HAVE TO TAKE HIM DOWN--
I--I CAN'T DO THIS ANYMORE.
ALL I *EVER* WANTED WAS TO RAISE MY CHILDREN IN A WORLD THAT FELT SECURE AND PROMISING.
AND NOW I HAVE *NEITHER.*
MY FAMILY SHATTERED...
I'VE ONLY EVER CREATED *CHAOS.*
STOP. NONE OF IT WAS YOUR DOING, WANDA.
YOU'VE SUFFERED MORE HATRED THAN I'VE SEEN ANYONE ENDURE.
BUT THE PERSECUTION *NEVER* BROUGHT YOU DOWN.
YOU PUSHED THROUGH IT, FOUGHT TO SHOW PEOPLE WHO YOU *TRULY* ARE.
I'VE SEEN WHO YOU TRULY ARE.
I KNOW THAT WITH YOU BY MY SIDE--
--WE CAN TAKE THIS BASTARD DOWN.
YEAH?
LET'S PUT IT TO THE TEST, YOU TRASH.
MOVE!
TOOOM THWOOM DOOM
DID THOSE TWO FORGET TO SHOW YOU THEIR AVENGERS I.D. CARDS--?


ENTITLES THE HOLDER TO AN ARMY OF EARTH'S MIGHTIEST IN MOMENTS OF DREAD.
COMPLIMENTARY ON BIRTHDAYS.
BUT I GUESS GIANT, OMNIPOTENT RED SKULLS WITH THE POWER OF A GOD CAN'T BE BOTHERED TO READ THE SMALL PRINT.
WHAT DO WE DO TO PEOPLE WHO DON'T READ THE SMALL TYPE, ODINSON?
THEY PAY A PENALTY!
GHAGH!
WHUNKK
TO BE FAIR, I DON'T THINK IT'S EITHER LADY'S BIRTHDAY.
I'M WILLING TO BEND THE RULES FOR MY OL' PAL, THE RED SKULL--
--GUESS I'M FEELIN' SASSY.
YERGGH--!
YOU KNOW, I'VE EXTERMINATED A WHOLE LOTTA MUTANTS IN MY CAREER.
AND IT CAN START TO GET A LITTLE REPETITIVE--
BUT I NEVER GET TIRED OF KILLING A SUMMERS. JUST SOMETHING ABOUT YOU PEOPLE.
SUCH CONTEMPT FOR THE SUMMERS CLAN--

BAMF
KROKK
--CLEARLY YOU HAVEN'T SEEN THEIR FAMILY VARIETY HOUR SPECIAL, AHAB.
IT'S QUITE HEARTWARMING.
RNGG--!
CABLE DOES A SPECTACULAR MIME ROUTINE.
RACHEL DOES FACE PAINTING.
DA, AND CORSAIR'S SPACEMAN SPIFF DANCE?
GAZZAK
FABULOUS.
KWOOOM
THEY CAME.
OF COURSE WE DID.
YOU'RE X-MEN.
THIS ISN'T WORK.
THIS IS FAMILY.

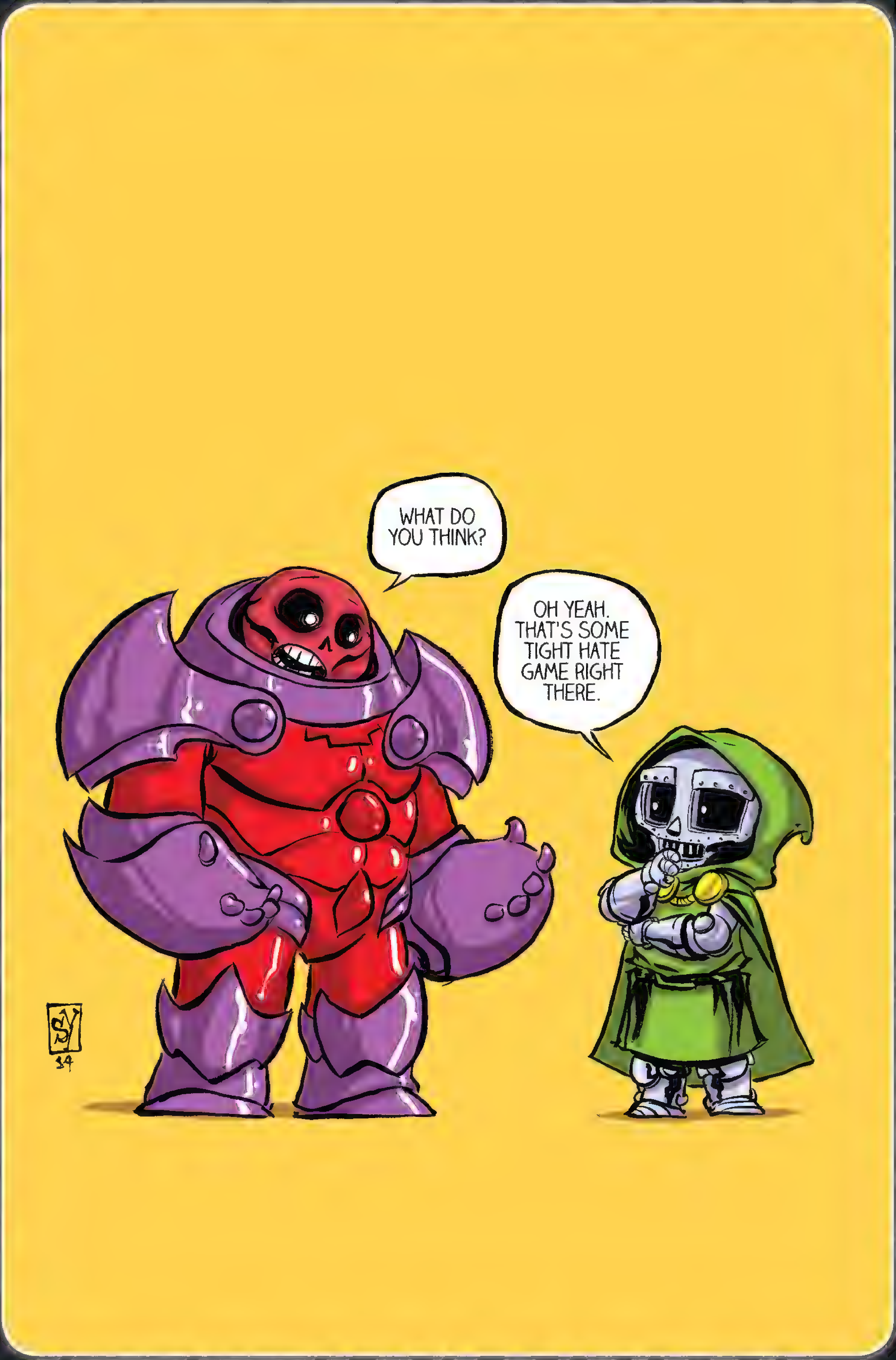
CAN WE ALL COME TOGETHER ONCE MORE AS X-MEN?
FOR CHARLES?
SCOTT...?
WE'RE DYSFUNCTIONAL...
...BUT THE X-MEN WILL *ALWAYS* COME TOGETHER IN A CRISIS.
I'M HERE, ALEX.
NO MATTER WHAT.
THAT'S AN AWFUL BIG *"WHAT."*
EVEN WITH ALL OF US TOGETHER-- WE'RE NOT ENOUGH TO STOP *THAT*.
GRA-DWOOOOM
THAT WAS ALWAYS YOUR PROBLEM, ALEX--

"--YOU NEVER HAD ANY FAITH THAT HELP WAS COMING."
X-MEN AND AVENGERS--I'D TELL YOU TO ASSEMBLE BUT THAT'D BE SHOWING FAVORITISM, SO INSTEAD--
--LET'S CRACK SOME SKULL!
ONE FOR GOOD MEASURE!
NICE.
WHY DO I FEEL LIKE I GOT THE **LESS** EXCITING ENTRANCE?
YOURS WAS JUST FINE, BOBBY.
SAYS THE LADY WHO GOT BRAGGING RIGHTS TO SAVING THE CONTRARIAN SUMMERS BROTHERS.
NICE TO SEE YOU TOO, ICEMAN.
AHH, THE **MIGHTY** AVENGERS SLUMMING IT WITH **FILTHY** MUTANTS...
MAN, THAT'S SOME CLASSIC NAZI RACISM BUSINESS.
I'VE NEVER STORMED A BEACH OR BEATEN A BIG NAZI--
EVERY CAPTAIN AMERICA SHOULD DO AT LEAST ONE.
HAVING TROUBLE WITH THE MIND-ZAPPING, SCHMIDT?
UNCLE STARK'S WACKY BLUE EXPLOSION PUT A SAD FACE ON THINGS.
SADDER ANYWAY.
TELEPATHY IS A REAL NEAT POWER IF IT WORKS.
STILL, IT'S ALL JUST FREQUENCIES.
BROADCAST THE COUNTER-FREQUENCY AND, WELL...

...NO MORE TELEPATHY.
THERE'S A TECHNOLOGICAL SOLUTION FOR EVERYTHING.
INDEED THERE IS, *HERR* STARK.
BUT DID YOU EVER STOP TO WONDER WHY YOU'D CREATED SUCH A DEVICE?
SOME PART OF YOU, DEEPLY AFRAID OF SOMETHING YOU'D DONE?
THOSE AMAZING *CIVIL WAR* FILES YOU GATHERED ON ALL OF YOUR COMPANIONS' *VULNERABILITIES--*
EVERY POWER, *EVERY* WEAKNESS.
ALL LAID *BARE* BEFORE *ME.*
AH, A FLICKER OF RECOLLECTION--
YOU ERASED THEM FROM YOUR MIND.
BUT, INTERESTINGLY, SOME PART OF YOU CHOSE TO KEEP THE INFORMATION HIDDEN DEEP DOWN.
THAT'S A LIE. THAT DATA...

WAS GIVEN TO *ME!*
IT TROUBLED YOU THAT THEY DIDN'T KNOW YOUR *TRUE* GREATNESS.
WHAT YOU COULD DO TO THEM IF YOU WANTED--
--SHOULD THEY FORGET THEIR PLACE.
PFSHHH
PFSHHH
POOR TONY-- SO AFRAID OF BEING SEEN AS AVERAGE.
SUCH A DEEP THIRST FOR ACKNOWLEDGMENT--
"--ENTITLEMENT TO HIS RIGHTFUL PLACE IN THIS WORLD.
"WORKING LATE INTO THE NIGHT, IT TOOK *LITTLE* TELEPATHIC INFLUENCE TO GET YOU TO BUILD YOUR MACHINES FOR ME--
"SO *EAGER* TO DISPLAY YOUR BRILLIANCE."
YOU REMEMBER, DON'T YOU?
YOU WERE OVERJOYED TO WEAPONIZE YOUR DIRTY LITTLE SECRETS FOR ME.
NO--!
AND NOW THE WORLD WILL SEE THE *FRUIT* OF YOUR *LABORS,* EGOTIST!
SEE THE TRUE *HATRED* WITHIN YOU GIVEN *FORM*--

TWO ADAMANTIUM STARK SENTINELS.
PROGRAMMED BY YOUR CLOSE FRIEND--
TO KILL YOU ALL.


WHAT DO YOU THINK?
OH YEAH. THAT'S SOME TIGHT HATE GAME RIGHT THERE.
SY
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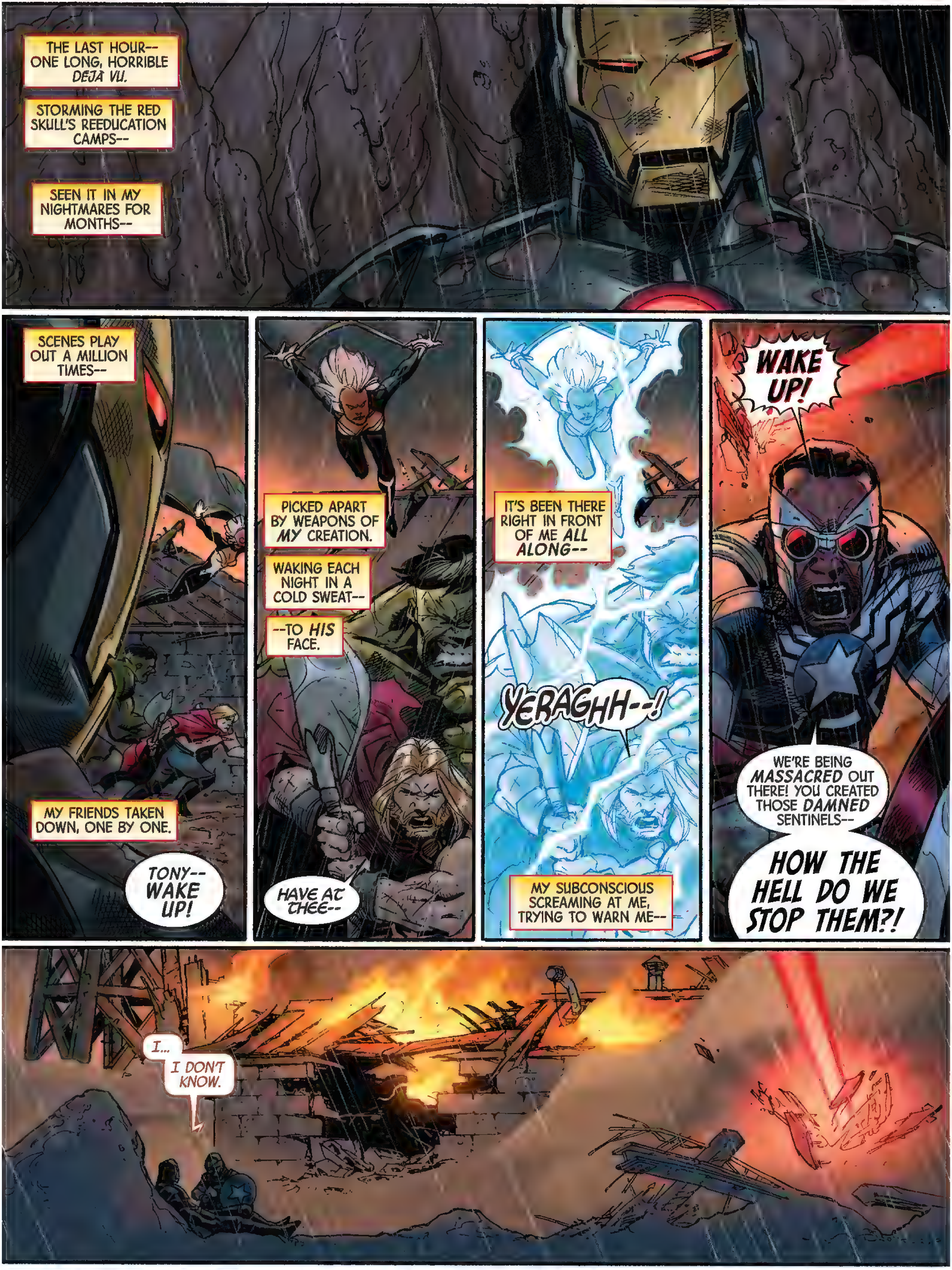
AXIS #1 VARIANT
BY SKOTTIE YOUNG

2
AXIS


THE LAST HOUR-- ONE LONG, HORRIBLE *DÉJÀ VU.*
STORMING THE RED SKULL'S REEDUCATION CAMPS--
SEEN IT IN MY NIGHTMARES FOR MONTHS--
SCENES PLAY OUT A MILLION TIMES--
MY FRIENDS TAKEN DOWN, ONE BY ONE.
TONY-- WAKE UP!
PICKED APART BY WEAPONS OF *MY* CREATION.
WAKING EACH NIGHT IN A COLD SWEAT--
--TO *HIS* FACE.
HAVE AT THEE--
IT'S BEEN THERE RIGHT IN FRONT OF ME *ALL ALONG*--
YERAGHH--!
MY SUBCONSCIOUS SCREAMING AT ME, TRYING TO WARN ME--
WAKE UP!
WE'RE BEING *MASSACRED* OUT THERE! YOU CREATED THOSE *DAMNED* SENTINELS--
HOW THE HELL DO WE STOP THEM?!
I... I DON'T KNOW.

THEME TO A DESPERATE SCENE

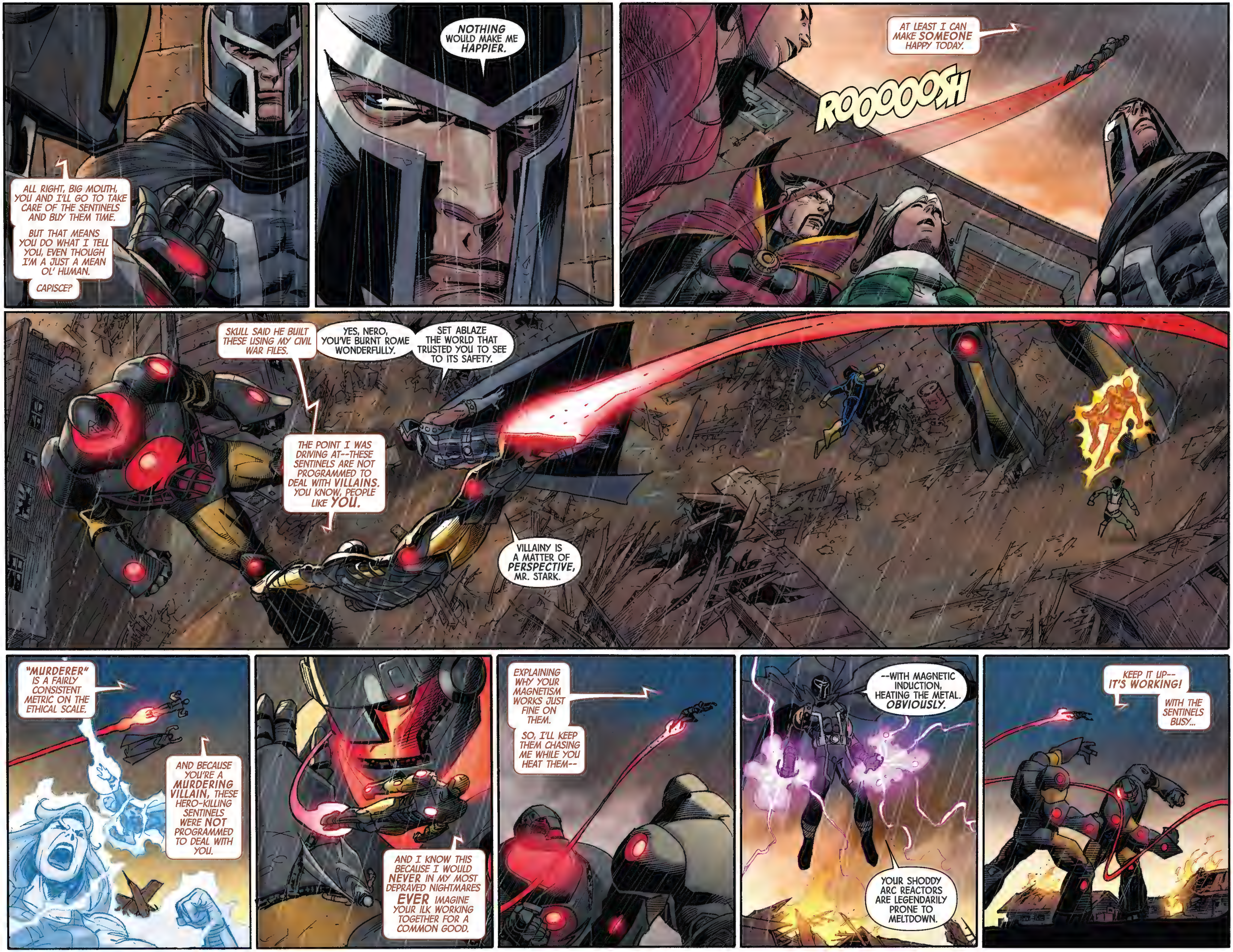
THE RED SUPREMACY: CHAPTER 2

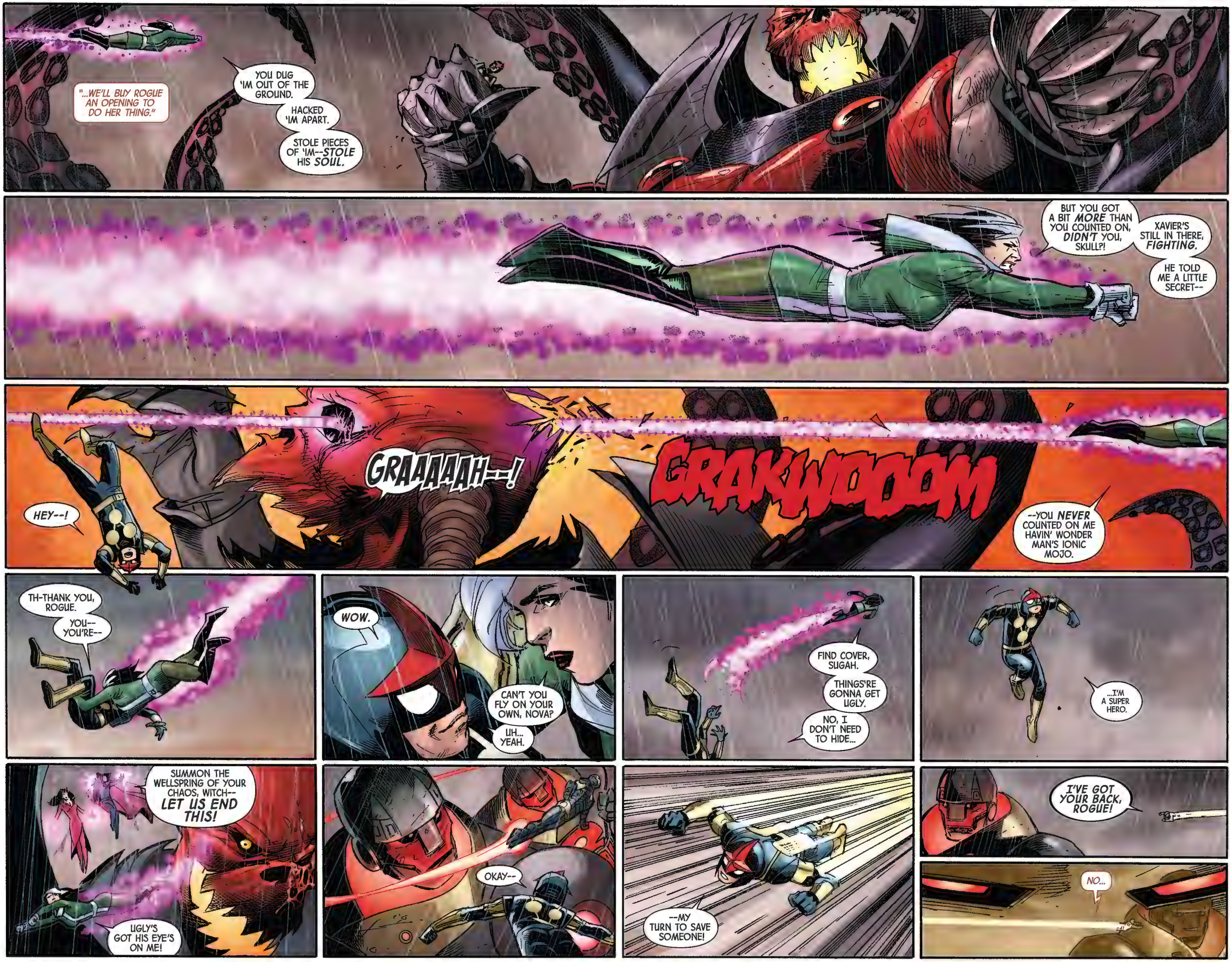
FOCUS, TONY.
YOU'RE NOT DEALING WITH THIS ALONE. I'M HERE, OKAY?
SAY THE WORDS.
Y-YOU'RE WITH ME...THE SAM TO MY FRODO.
LIFE IS BEAUTIFUL, POSITIVE AFFIRMATIONS AND GROOVY DREAMS.
GOOD. I PREFER A SMART-ASS TONY STARK TO A CATATONIC ONE. NOW GIVE ME SOME IDEA HOW TO STOP YOUR SENTINELS.
I HAVE ZERO RECOLLECTION OF CREATING THESE THINGS, CAP--
I REMEMBER THINKING ABOUT IT--CONSIDERING HOW I'D DO IT...
OKAY, ENERGY--PHYSICAL ATTACK IS TOO OBVIOUS--
--TARGETING-BASED COLLECTION--
IF THEY SEE YOU--
--MOVE!
AS A BOY, I KEPT A MENTAL JOURNAL ABOUT THE KIDS IN SCHOOL.
ALL THE FEARS THEY EXPOSED--
--THE WEAKNESSES THEY COULDN'T HIDE.
DETAILED DISSECTIONS OF WHAT I PERCEIVED TO BE MY COMPETITION--
--WHICH OVER TIME TURNED OUT TO BE THE ENTIRE HUMAN RACE.
OKAY, WHAT'S THE PERFECT SENTINEL? IT ISN'T A KILLING MACHINE DUELING WITH SUPER-HUMANS IN THE STREETS.
IT'S ALL TAEKWONDO--WHY ATTACK A SUPER HERO HEAD ON?

BETTER TO AVOID CONFLICT--USE THE TARGET'S ENERGY--THAT'S IT!
THEY'RE CONTAINMENT UNITS!
I USED THAT LIST TO SURPASS THE OTHER STUDENTS.
SHAME.
CRUELTY.
MANIPULATION.
I'D WIN BY ANY MEANS NECESSARY.
THEY COUNTER THE TARGET'S STRENGTHS, BATHE THEM IN PYM PARTICLES AND THEN HOLD THEM PRISONER WITHIN!
ZAK ZAK ZAK
WHEN I GOT SOBER, I SOUGHT FORGIVENESS FROM THE KIDS I'D SHAMED THE WORST.
TWOOM
DOOOM
I APOLOGIZED TO EACH OF THEM.
KROOOM
FINE! NOW HOW DO WE STOP THEM?!
LOCKING ON TARGET.
ONSLAUGHT WILL BE FREE OF YOUR TELEPATHIC DAMPENERS ANY SECOND--
TONY?!
I PROMISED THEM I'D STOPPED MY MACHIAVELLIAN, SOCIOPATHIC BEHAVIOR.
BUT I KNEW IT WAS A LIE.
TWUNGG
MOVE!
YEARS PASSED AND I BEGAN A NEW JOURNAL ON A NEW CLASS--
GROOOOOM
BUT I COULD ALWAYS HEAR THAT BROKEN PROMISE.

A REMINDER OF WHO I AM, THE TRUTH ABOUT WHAT DRIVES ME:
COMPETITION.
ARMOR REIGNITION PROCESS INITIATED.
FIVE SECONDS.
I DON'T HAVE ANY SECONDS!
FRANTIC TO PROVE MY WORTH TO THOSE AROUND ME.
BECAUSE DEEP DOWN--
--I'VE ALWAYS BEEN AFRAID IT WASN'T ENOUGH.
DIVERT ALL POWER TO THRUSTERS-- GET ME OUT OF HERE NOW!
REIGNITION IN THREE SECONDS.
TARGET LOCKED.
TWO SECONDS.
OVERRIDE-- NOW! DIVERT EVERYTHING TO THRUSTERS!
PRIDE--THE GREATEST STRUGGLE OF MY LIFE.
AND THIS TIME MY LITTLE LIST--
SKRAWK--
--JUST GAVE THE RED SKULL THE KEY TO TAKING OVER THE ENTIRE WORLD.
WHAT THE HELL--?!

I WAS CIRCLING THE DRAIN THERE--THANKS, STRANGE.
BY THE MOONS OF MUNIPOOR, OUR NUMBERS DECIMATED!
I FEAR WE ARE OUTMATCHED.
MY P.R. GUY CHIP WOULD CALL THIS "AN OPPORTUNITY TO DEMONSTRATE OUR TALENT."
IT'S ONLY AN OPPORTUNITY WHEN THOSE TALENTS PROVE ADEQUATE.
AND YOURS ARE, IS THAT RIGHT, EVIL McGEE?
I HAVE A GREAT DEAL OF EXPERIENCE DISPATCHING MUTANT ASSASSINATION MACHINES CREATED BY HUMANS--
THERE ARE ALWAYS SO MANY, MR. STARK.
CAN I RAIN-CHECK THE SELF-RIGHTEOUS LECTURE?
IF YOU BOYS ARE DONE MEASURIN', I MIGHT HAVE A SOLUTION.
THAT WOULD BE FANTASTIC.
WHEN I TOUCHED ONSLAUGHT--I SAW XAVIER.
SOME SHRED OF HIS ESSENCE IS STILL INSIDE THAT THING.
IF SOMEHOW WE CAN BRING HIM OUT...
ALL WE NEED IS A ROTATION OF AXIS.
IF I CHANNEL CHAOS AND YOU MATCH IT WITH ORDER, WE COULD CREATE AN IN-BETWEEN EFFECT, STRANGE.
INVERT THE PERSONALITIES AND PUT CHARLES XAVIER IN CONTROL.
IT COULD WORK.
FIRST WE MUST DEAL WITH MR. STARK'S KILLING MACHINES.
QUIT CALLING ME "MR. STARK," SUPER PASSIVE-AGGRESSIVE.
I GET IT. THIS IS MY FAULT.
MESSAGE RECEIVED.


ALL RIGHT, BIG MOUTH, YOU AND I'LL GO TO TAKE CARE OF THE SENTINELS AND BUY THEM TIME.
BUT THAT MEANS YOU DO WHAT I TELL YOU, EVEN THOUGH I'M A JUST A MEAN OL' HUMAN.
CAPISCE?
NOTHING WOULD MAKE ME HAPPIER.
AT LEAST I CAN MAKE SOMEONE HAPPY TODAY.
ROOOOOSH
SKULL SAID HE BUILT THESE USING MY CIVIL WAR FILES.
YES, NERO, YOU'VE BURNT ROME WONDERFULLY.
SET ABLAZE THE WORLD THAT TRUSTED YOU TO SEE TO ITS SAFETY.
THE POINT I WAS DRIVING AT--THESE SENTINELS ARE NOT PROGRAMMED TO DEAL WITH VILLAINS. YOU KNOW, PEOPLE LIKE YOU.
VILLAINY IS A MATTER OF PERSPECTIVE, MR. STARK.
"MURDERER" IS A FAIRLY CONSISTENT METRIC ON THE ETHICAL SCALE.
AND BECAUSE YOU'RE A MURDERING VILLAIN, THESE HERO-KILLING SENTINELS WERE NOT PROGRAMMED TO DEAL WITH YOU.
AND I KNOW THIS BECAUSE I WOULD NEVER IN MY MOST DEPRAVED NIGHTMARES EVER IMAGINE YOUR ILK WORKING TOGETHER FOR A COMMON GOOD.
EXPLAINING WHY YOUR MAGNETISM WORKS JUST FINE ON THEM.
SO, I'LL KEEP THEM CHASING ME WHILE YOU HEAT THEM--
--WITH MAGNETIC INDUCTION, HEATING THE METAL. OBVIOUSLY.
YOUR SHODDY ARC REACTORS ARE LEGENDARILY PRONE TO MELTDOWN.
KEEP IT UP-- IT'S WORKING!
WITH THE SENTINELS BUSY...


"...WE'LL BUY ROGUE AN OPENING TO DO HER THING."
YOU DUG 'IM OUT OF THE GROUND.
HACKED 'IM APART.
STOLE PIECES OF 'IM--STOLE HIS SOUL.
BUT YOU GOT A BIT MORE THAN YOU COUNTED ON, DIDN'T YOU, SKULL?!
XAVIER'S STILL IN THERE, FIGHTING.
HE TOLD ME A LITTLE SECRET--
HEY--!
GRAAAAAH--!
GRAKWOOOM
--YOU NEVER COUNTED ON ME HAVIN' WONDER MAN'S IONIC MOJO.
TH-THANK YOU, ROGUE.
YOU-- YOU'RE--
WOW.
CAN'T YOU FLY ON YOUR OWN, NOVA?
UH... YEAH.
FIND COVER, SUGAH.
THINGS'RE GONNA GET UGLY.
NO, I DON'T NEED TO HIDE...
...I'M A SUPER HERO.
SUMMON THE WELLSPRING OF YOUR CHAOS, WITCH-- LET US END THIS!
UGLY'S GOT HIS EYE'S ON ME!
OKAY--
--MY TURN TO SAVE SOMEONE!
I'VE GOT YOUR BACK, ROGUE!
NO...

GRAKWOOOM
STOP! THAT'S NOT THE PLA--
IRON MAN...?
DWOOOOOOM
YOU SAY SOMETHING ABOUT A PLAN--
SKWOOOM
RGHAAAA
THE NEXUS IS STABLE--!
TARGET ACQUIRED.
THE CHAOS REALM SURGES.
QUICKLY, DELIVER THE ORDER ENERGIES INTO THE HELIX--

WANDA--WE ARE IN A SENTINEL'S SIGHTS--MOVE!
NO!
THE SPELL'S NEARLY--
DEAR GOD...
GRAAH--!
GRAZZOOM
KROOOM
AND JUST LIKE THAT--
--THE PLAN'S A WASH.
MAGNETO'S DOWN--
--BOTH SORCERERS ARE GONE.
HAVEN'T OFTEN HAD TO FACE MY OWN INGENUITY.
DOESN'T FEEL GREAT.

MUST'VE TAKEN ME MONTHS TO DREAM THESE SENTINELS UP--
NO--
--ONLY GOT A MATTER OF SECONDS TO STOP THEM.
KWOOOOM
YERAGHH--!
INTEGRITY 18%
IF I WERE THE ONLY ONE PAYING THE PRICE, IT WOULD BE ALMOST PERFECT IRONY--
--BUT I'M NOT.
INTEGRITY 11%
HYDRAULICS REROUTE TO LEFT LEG!
IT'S EVERYONE I EVER CARED FOR.
IT'S EVERYTHING PEPPER EVER WARNED ME ABOUT.
REROUTE ALL REMAINING ENERGY TO HYDRAULICS!
NOW-- EVERYTHING!
INTEGRITY 2%
MY OWN TECHNOLOGY TAKEN OUT OF MY HANDS--
--USED BY THE WRONG PEOPLE TO DO THE WORST THINGS.
SHELL INTEGRITY COMPROMISED.
GHRRAGHRA--
AN ACUTE INABILITY TO IMAGINE MY OWN FAILINGS.
SHELL INTEGRITY COMPROMISED.
PEPPER ALWAYS SAID IT WOULD BE MY UNDOING--

--THAT IT WAS ONLY A MATTER OF TIME.
MAGNETO!
SHELL INTEGRITY COMPROMISED.
HELP--! CRUSHING-- G-GET IT OFF OF-- YERHRAGHH--!
SHELL INTEGRITY COMPROMISED.
YOU ROTTEN SON OF A--!
SHELL INTEGRITY COMPROMISED.
BAMF
GHRAGHHH--!
DAMNED--
GREATEST GENERATION--
GERMANS--
WE GERMANS ARE NOT ALL BAD, HERR STARK.
NO GERMANS--
BAMF
GRADOOOOM

--NO STRUDEL.
WE CAN'T ATTEMPT ANOTHER ATTACK.
THE LAST ONE COST US A DOZEN HEROES.
THERE HAVE TO BE OTHERS WE CAN REACH.
AVENGERS RESERVES, NEW WARRIORS...

...THE MIDNIGHT SONS, THE ETERNALS--?!
SOMEONE!
UNG...
ALL BUSY HOLDING BACK WORLD WAR HATE, JANET.
LOOK WHO IS AWAKE.
ALMOST LIKE HE TIMED IT TO MISS OUR LAST FAILED ATTACK.
GOOD MORNING, BUTTERMILK.
MORNING? HOW LONG WAS I OUT?
ALL NIGHT.
IT'S OKAY. WE'RE SAFE. SKULL HASN'T FOUND US HERE--QUENTIN'S TELEPATHICALLY BLOCKING HIS BROADCASTS.
BUT IT SUCKS, MAN...
WHERE ARE THE OTHERS?
WHILE I WAS EVACUATING THE PRISONERS, I SAW THE LAST OF THEM GO DOWN.
EVAPORATED BEFORE OUR EYES.
WE'RE IT, STARK.
YOUR PAL MAGNETO LEFT ME IN THE LURCH, EVEN LEFT HIS DAUGHTER BEHIND.
QUALITY PEOPLE YOU RUN WITH, HAVOK.
HE'S NO FRIEND OF MINE.
DEEEP
STEVE? ARE YOU PICKING THIS UP?
STEVE'S NOT ANSWERING. WE'VE TRIED.
THEN IT APPEARS WE ARE THE CAVALRY.
NOT A BAD GROUP TO DIE WITH.
I LOVE YOU TOO, SUE.
I DO, BUT--

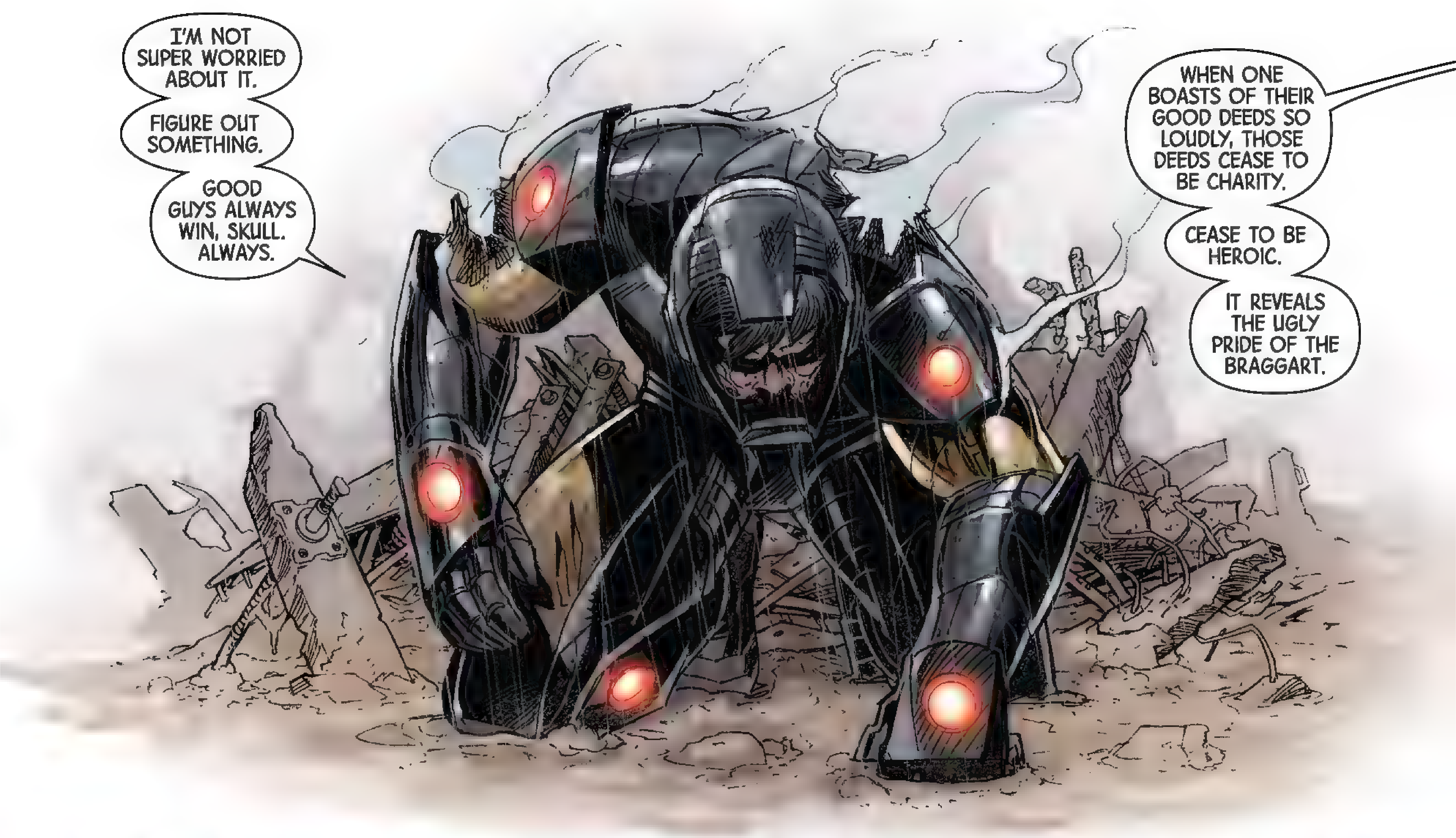
--I'M NOT GOING TO DIE HERE!
NONE OF US ARE.
WE'RE NOT LEAVING THE WORLD TO THE RED SKULL!
JANET, YOU ASKED ME WHY WE DO THIS, WHY WE HAVE TO PAY THE PRICE.
I DIDN'T KNOW THEN, BUT I DO NOW.
IT DOESN'T MATTER WHY WE DO THE RIGHT THING...
...JUST SO LONG AS WE DO IT.
WE'VE BEEN GIVEN THE TOOLS.
SO WE EITHER STEP UP OR WATCH THE WORLD BURN.
DAMN IT...
WHAT?
THAT WAS A PRETTY GOOD SPEECH.
HE'S RIGHT. THE BURDEN FALLS ON OUR SHOULDERS.
AGAIN.
BUT MORE THAN FOR JUST OTHER PEOPLE--FOR US.
WE HAVE A BEAUTIFUL FAMILY TO BUILD TOGETHER.
KURT, I KNOW THINGS HAVE BEEN STRAINED--
DON'T, SCOTT. I KNOW.
IT MAKES ME VERY HAPPY TO FIGHT BY YOUR SIDE AGAIN.
ONE LAST TIME, FUZZY ELF.

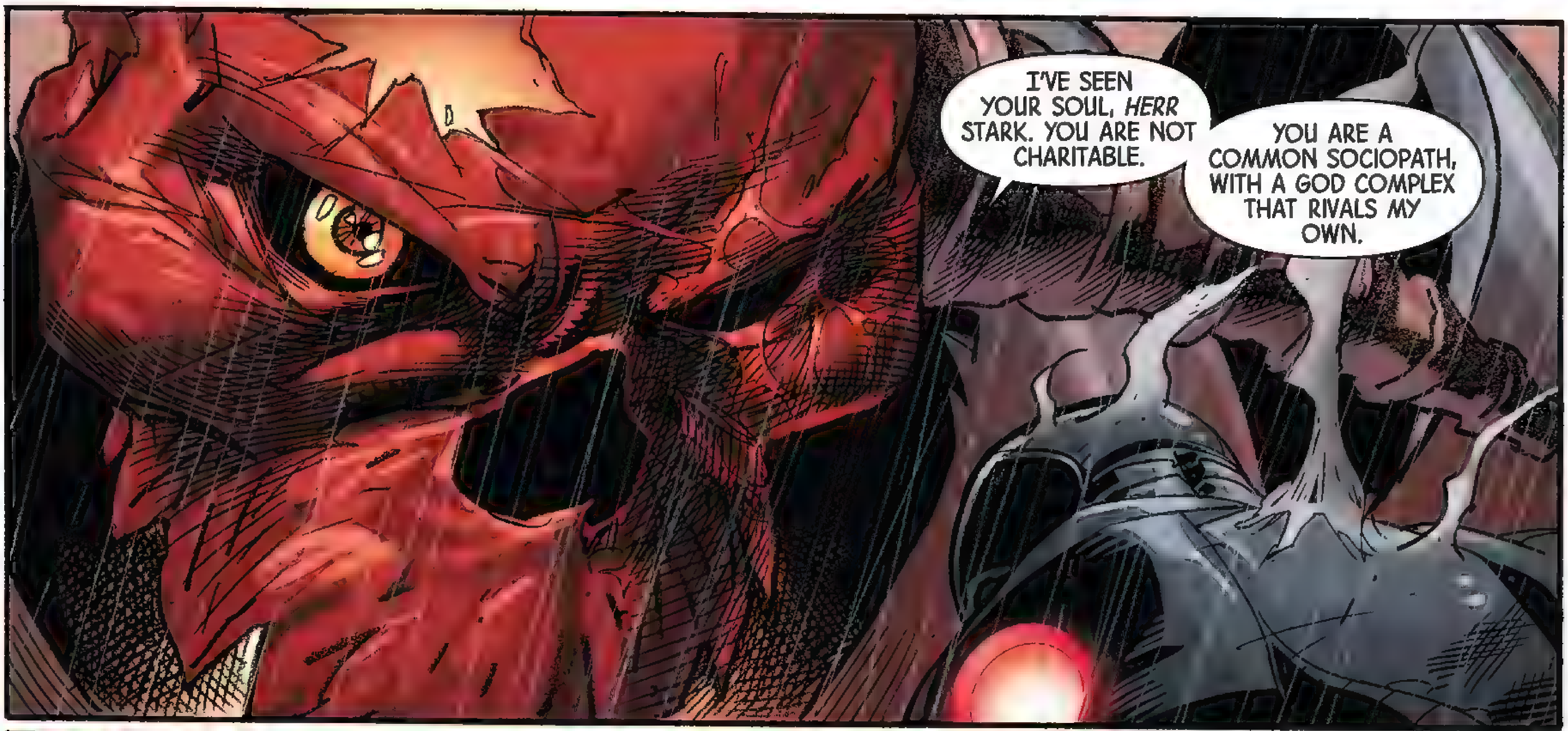
ALEX, YOU WANTED A *UNITY SQUAD*-- YOU'VE GOT ONE.
CALL THE PLAN.
ONLY ONE WAY AT IT: NIGHTCRAWLER AND INVISIBLE WOMAN GET US PAST THOSE SENTINELS--
QUENTIN KEEPS US MENTALLY PROTECTED--
"--AND WE THROW EVERYTHING WE'VE GOT AT SKULL."
THE LAST OF THE VERMIN CRAWL FROM THEIR HOLES.
CHARLES, IF YOU'RE IN THERE, IF YOU CAN HEAR ME--
--NO MATTER HOW THIS ENDS, THERE'S BEEN AT LEAST *ONE* VICTORY.
THE AVENGERS, X-MEN AND INHUMANS HAVE COME *TOGETHER*.
SHUT HIM UP!
I HOPE SEEING IT BRINGS YOU SOME COMFORT.
UNITY IS POSSIBLE.
GLAZZOOOM
SCOTT AND I--
--WE AGREE ON SO LITTLE--
--BUT THE GOOD MAN HE ONCE WAS ISN'T DEAD YET.
BAMF
FOR CHARLES!
DA.
WHEN THE CHIPS WERE DOWN, HE WAS THERE FOR US.

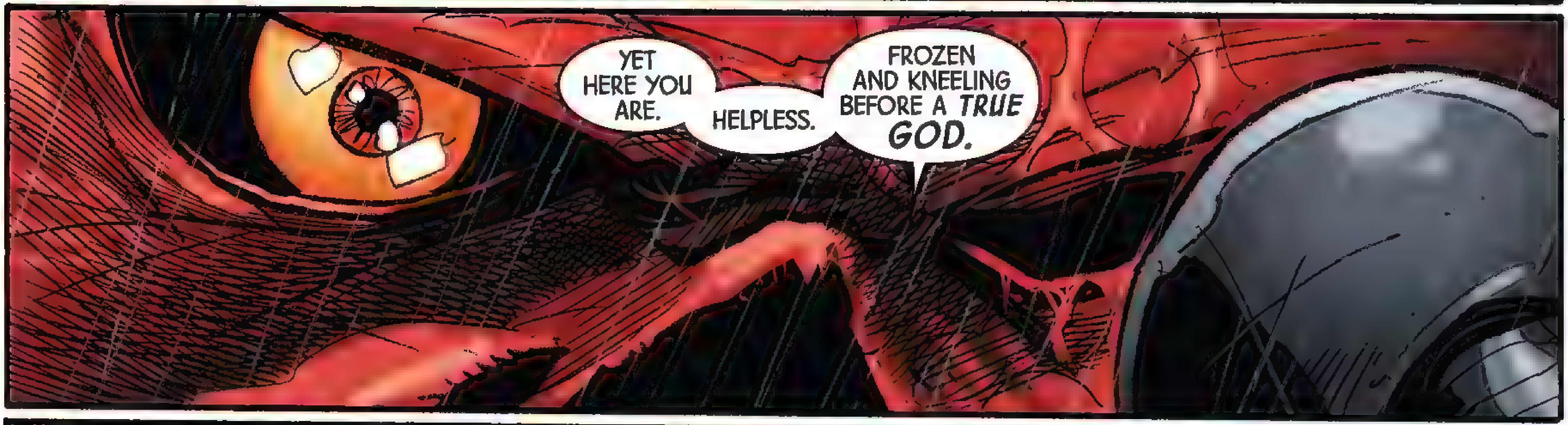
MORE THAN ANYTHING, THAT WAS WHAT DROVE SCOTT TODAY.
NOW, SUE--!
THOUGH HE'D NEVER ADMIT HE HAD A HAND IN YOUR DEATH--
--HIS GUILT AND SADNESS CAN'T BE HIDDEN.
ON IT.
GROOOOOM
YERAGHH--!
BUT TODAY SCOTT SUMMERS FOUGHT ALONGSIDE SWORN ENEMIES--
--TO PROTECT A WORLD THAT HATES AND FEARS HIM.
THAT ALL YOU GOT, LITTLE BROTHER?
I HAVEN'T EVEN STARTED.
SIBLING RIVALRY TO THE END.
BAMF
BUT REALLY--
--HE WAS THERE FOR YOU, PROFESSOR.
KWOOOOOM
GHRAGHH--!

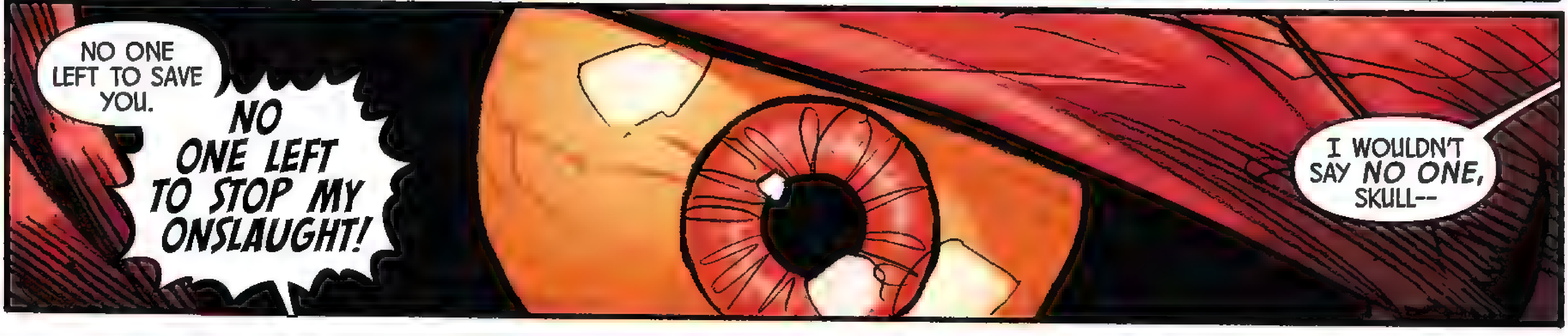
I SUSPECT HE DOES IT IN HOPES OF EARNING YOUR FORGIVENESS, CHARLES.
TARGET LOCKED.
TO TRY AND MAKE YOU PROUD.
I LOVE YOU, ALEX.
YOU BETTER.
THE SENTINELS ARE ONTO OUR APPROACH.
I'M GROUNDED-- ALMOST NO POWER LEFT.
KURT, SUE, MEDUSA-- TAKE THE FIGHT TO HIM.
HMMH.
GO--HELP COLOSSUS TEAR SKULL'S HEAD OFF.
EVEN IF WE COULD--THAT CAN'T POSSIBLY KILL HIM, TONY.
I KNOW.
BUT IT CAN'T HURT.

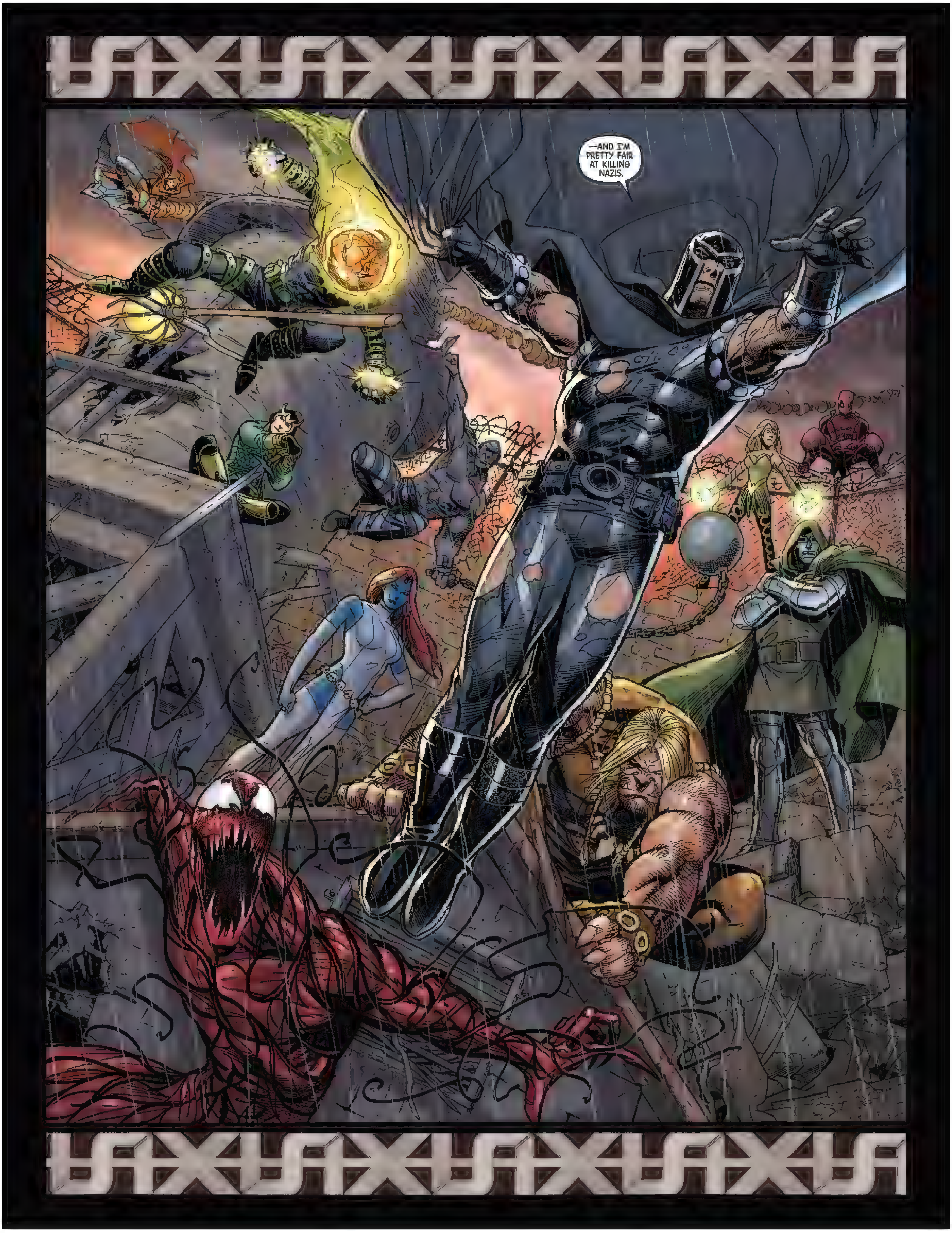
BAMF
HELP'S ARRIVED, PIOTR!
SUCH *RANK* DESPERATION.
OVER HERE, TRASH CAN-- *LOOK AT ME!*
GAZAK
GAZAK
GAZAK
IT'S LOCKED ON TO US--!
SUE, QUICKLY, AN INVISIB--
AND SO THE LAST OF YOUR GREAT RESISTANCE *CRUMBLES* BEFORE ME.
I *PROMISED* YOU WOULD LIVE TO SEE ALL YOU LOVED *OBLITERATED* BEFORE YOU, *HERR* STARK.
AND YOU *WILL.*
SYSTEMS FAILURE.
RESERVES DEPLETED.


I'M NOT SUPER WORRIED ABOUT IT.
FIGURE OUT SOMETHING.
GOOD GUYS ALWAYS WIN, SKULL. ALWAYS.
WHEN ONE BOASTS OF THEIR GOOD DEEDS SO LOUDLY, THOSE DEEDS CEASE TO BE CHARITY.
CEASE TO BE HEROIC.
IT REVEALS THE UGLY PRIDE OF THE BRAGGART.


I'VE SEEN YOUR SOUL, HERR STARK. YOU ARE NOT CHARITABLE.
YOU ARE A COMMON SOCIOPATH, WITH A GOD COMPLEX THAT RIVALS MY OWN.


YET HERE YOU ARE.
HELPLESS.
FROZEN AND KNEELING BEFORE A TRUE GOD.


NO ONE LEFT TO SAVE YOU.
NO ONE LEFT TO STOP MY ONSLAUGHT!
I WOULDN'T SAY NO ONE, SKULL--


—AND I'M PRETTY FAIR AT KILLING NAZIS.

AXIS #1 INVERSION VARIANT
BY GABRIELE DELL'OTTO

3
AXIS

GOOD NEWS FOR BAD PEOPLE

THE RED SUPREMACY: CHAPTER 3

MY NAME IS LANCE CORPORAL WADE WILSON.
ME AN' THE MEN OF THE 356TH REGIMENT BAREBACK MOUNTIES LEFT SWEET MARY CRACKERCORN AND HOODWINKLE'S ICE CREAM PARLOR TO COME FIGHT OVERSEAS IN GENOSHA TO STOMP A NAZI.
TO GIVE WHAT WE HAVE TO THE GOOD FIGHT.
AND MAYBE-- JUST *MAYBE*--
--MAKE A NEW BEST FRIEND.
YOU KNOW HOW SOMETIMES YOU SHOW UP AT A PARTY AT THE SAME TIME AS SOME GOOFS AND YOU WORRY EVERYONE'LL THINK YOU CAME WITH THEM?
IT'S RUDE, BUT YOU WANT TO TELL THE HOST THAT YOU DIDN'T COME WITH THE LOSERS, RIGHT?
SEE, I GET THAT IT LOOKS LIKE I'M WITH THESE GUYS, IRON MAN--BUT I'M *TOTALLY* NOT.
WHERE ARE YOU TAKING ME, DEADPOOL?
I MISSED THE GOOD GUY BUS. CAUGHT A RIDE WITH THE VILLAINS.
BUT I'M *NOT* A SUPER VILLAIN.
WHERE THE HELL ARE YOU TAKING ME?
OH, LIKE THAT GUY THERE.
THAT'S A *REAL* SUPER VILLAIN--*THE HOBGOBLIN!*
HE'S JUST LIKE THE GREEN GOBLIN, EXCEPT, YOU KNOW, HE'S GOT MORE "*HOB.*"
"THE GUY BEHIND HIM IS *CARNAGE.*
"HE'S A BLOODTHIRSTY REDNECK SERIAL KILLER INSIDE A CRAZY ALIEN SYMBIOTE.
"I GUESS '*CARNAGE*' SOUNDED COOLER THAN '*RED VENOM.*'"
LOOKIT ME NOW, MA--

--I'M A DANG SUPER HERO!
AN' THEY SAID I WOULDN'T AMOUNT TO NOTHIN' IN MAXIMUM-SECURITY DETENTION!
THINK WE'LL GET ON *OPRAH* FOR SAVIN' THE WORLD?
I COULD MARK "MURDER A STUDIO AUDIENCE" OFF O' THE BUCKET LIST.
DAMN, SKULL, YOU GONE TO ALL THIS TROUBLE TO BUILD UP THESE PERFECT SENTINELS AN' YOU DIDN'T EVEN CONSIDER US?
THAT'S THE KIND OF OVERSIGHT THAT GETS YOU *UNINVITED* TO FONDUE PARTIES.
NORMALLY OL' CLETUS KASADY'D BE ONBOARD WITH THE WHOLE "CONCENTRATION CAMP" VIBE SKULL'S GOT GOING HERE.
TARGET LOCKED.
SUBJUGATION, DEATH, MUD, SQUALOR, GIANT EVIL ROBOTS-- THIS IS MY SCIENCE, YO!
BUT SEEIN' AS HOW WE'D ALL HAVE TA BOW AN' WORSHIP AT THE FEET OF LORD RED SKULL, WELL--
THWIPP
SKRENCH
--THAT JUST AIN'T COUNTRY.

LOOK AT THAT.
TORE AN EYE OUT OF THE BEHEMOTH. THE INBRED FOOL DID JUST AS YOU REQUESTED.
FOOLS DO AS DOOM REQUESTS.
A NOVELTY T-SHIRT IF EVER THERE WAS ONE.
IT'S MARCHING THIS WAY.
YOU *SHOULD* MOVE.
BY YOUR LAST STATEMENT, IF I WERE TO *BLINDLY* FOLLOW YOUR ADVICE, WOULD THAT NOT MAKE *ME* A FOOL?
THAT DISTINCTION IS MERELY A MATTER OF DEGREES, LOKI.
BETTER TO IGNORE A DOOM AND BE THOUGHT A FOOL THAN TO DO AS HE SAYS AND REMOVE ALL--
KWOOOOOM
SURELY YOU WERE NOT DISPATCHED SO READILY, LOKI. SOME MANNER OF CHICANERY?
I *DID* GET STRAIGHT A'S IN CHICANERY 101.
MRS. JOHANSON'S STAR TRICKSTER!
A DECEIVER OF EYES, HEARTS AND MINDS--

IT WAS IN THE SCHOOL PAPER AND EVERYTHING.
KROOOM
SQUARK--!
A LITTLE SOMETHING TO ADD TO YOUR FILES FOR NEXT TIME, ROBOT.
THIS AUTOMATON NEED MAKE NO NOTES FROM ITS FIRST ENCOUNTER WITH DOOM.
ITS FIRST WILL BE ITS *LAST*.
GRAZOOOM
RENCH
EVEN *YOU* MUST SEE THE INHERENT RIDICULOUSNESS IN YOUR EGO, DOOM.
I AM *CLEARLY* BEST SUITED TO REND THIS BEAST NOW WEAKENED.
FRIENDSHIP, PLAN-MAKING AND COOPERATION... WHO KNEW, RIGHT?
ENOUGH WORDS.
THERE IS NO GAIN FROM PLAYING GAMES HERE, PRINCE OF LIES--

GAMES? PFFT. I'M ON THE UP AND UP NOW, MAGNETO.
I'M A REAL SWELL GUY, A BRIGHT CHARACTER-- A HUGGER.
I HAVE A TEA GARDEN, I MEDITATE...
NOW, IF I WERE YOU I'D KEEP ONE OF THOSE SUSPICIOUS MAGNETIC EYES POINTED THAT-A-WAYS.
DOOM'S ONE HUNDRED PERCENT LOOKING FOR SOME WAY HE CAN BETRAY US AND TURN THIS TO HIS ADVANTAGE.
NO OFFENSE INTENDED.
NONE TAKEN.
COME--RED SKULL'S TELEPATHY MAY BE BLOCKED FOR NOW--
"...BUT I FEAR OUR TELEPATH CAN'T BLOCK HIM MUCH LONGER."
GHRAGH--!
THIS SUCKS!
HIS MIND-- EVERYWHERE--
HE'S SEEPING INTO MY HEAD-- INFECTING MY THOUGHTS!
I CAN'T GUARD US MUCH LONGER, EVAN--
YOU CAN, QUENTIN.
YOU HAVE TO.
JUST BUY ME A LITTLE MORE TIME TO HEAL AND I CAN GO HELP, OKAY?
YOU CAN DO THIS...

"...I BELIEVE IN YOU."
YOU *SAD FOOLS* HAVE SIDED WITH THESE FAILED *WRETCHES?!*
YOU CLEARLY LACK THE FORESIGHT TO SEE WHEN A BATTLE'S OUTCOME IS PREDETERMINED!
STILL *ONE* WRETCH TO GO, SKULL...
...AND THIS ONE'S GOT A PERFECT TRACK RECORD OF TAKING YOU DOWN.
HERR ROGERS, I'D SO HOPED THE RUMORS OF YOUR AGING WERE UNTRUE.
TORTURING A FEEBLE OLD MAN SOUNDED SO ANTI-CLIMACTIC.
BUT ZOLA SHOWED ME THE *PATHETIC* STATE THE IRON NAIL LEFT YOU IN!
HOW IS SUCH A RECOVERY POSSIBLE?
STEEL-CUT OATS, SIT-UPS, SPINACH AND PRIDE IN EAGLES.
YOU PLAY GAMES?!
I AM THE RIGHTEOUS ANGER OF HUMANITY, TAKEN FORM!
THE HATRED OF A PEOPLE TURNED OBSOLETE WHEN GODS MEDDLED ON THEIR WORLDS AND MUTANTS POLLUTED THE GENE POOL!
YEAH? AND I'M *NOT* STEVE ROGERS.
BUT SEEING HIM *SURE* DID RILE YOU UP.
I'M JUST THE *DISTRACTION...*

"...SHE'S THE HEAVY."
YOU?!
NO MERE ENCHANTRESS CAN CONTEND WITH WHAT I HAVE BECOME, ASGARDIAN DOG!
TOXIC, PSYCHIC HATE, DEVOID OF ALL EMOTION.
I'VE ALWAYS LOVED A CHALLENGE.
I WILL BREAK YOU!
NO--
YOU WILL LOVE ME.
DOES IT HURT? IT MUST.
FOR A BEING OF PURE HATE TO FEEL SUCH UNTAMED LOVE FOR SOMEONE-- SUCH A CONFLICTING DICHOTOMY OF EMOTIONS.
DON'T FIGHT IT.
EVERY CREATURE DESERVES TO FEEL LOVE AT LEAST ONCE--
GHRAGHH--!
THOUGH IT APPEARS TO BE TEARING YOUR ROTTEN SOUL APART.

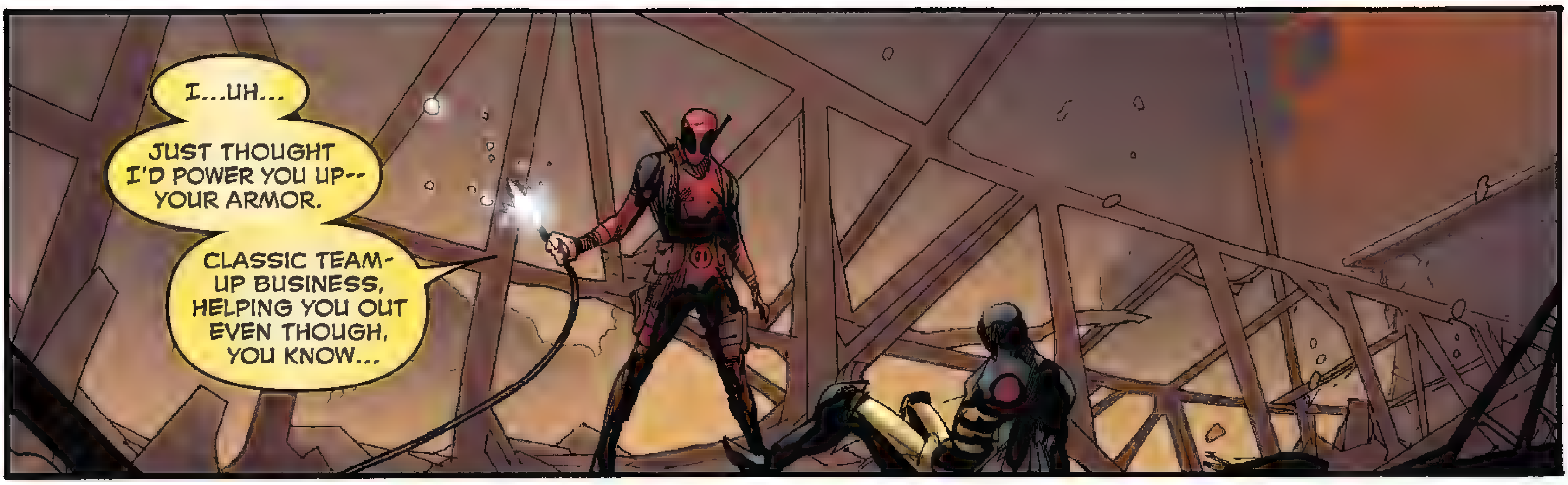
I AIN'T A FAN OF TAKIN' ORDERS FROM NO FRAIL--BUT ENCHANTRESS AN' MYSTIQUE ARE THE EXCEPTIONS.
DON'T FALL IN LOVE, SWEAT-BOMB--I PLAN ON KILLIN' 'EM BOTH WHEN THIS IS OVER!
THOUGHT O' KILLIN' Y'ALL IS WHAT'S KEEPIN' ME MOVIN'!
I'M GAME TO SEE YOU TRY, REDNECK!
MAKE WAY, LADIES!
TIME FOR A *MAN* TA DO SOME WORK!
AIN'T NO PARTY LIKE A CRUSHER CREEL PARTY--
--'CAUSE A CRUSHER CREEL PARTY IS MADE OF *ADAMANTIUM!*
RAGROOOOM
THAT'S HOW IT'S *DONE,* YA PUNKS.
MAN, YOU AIN'T GOTTA BE ARROGANT LIKE THAT. WE WEAKENED IT UP A LITTLE...
HAR! BABY KASADY NEED SOME RECOGNITION?
COURTESY DOESN'T COST YA ANYTHING.
AH, DON'T YOU WORRY, SWEET CHEEKS...

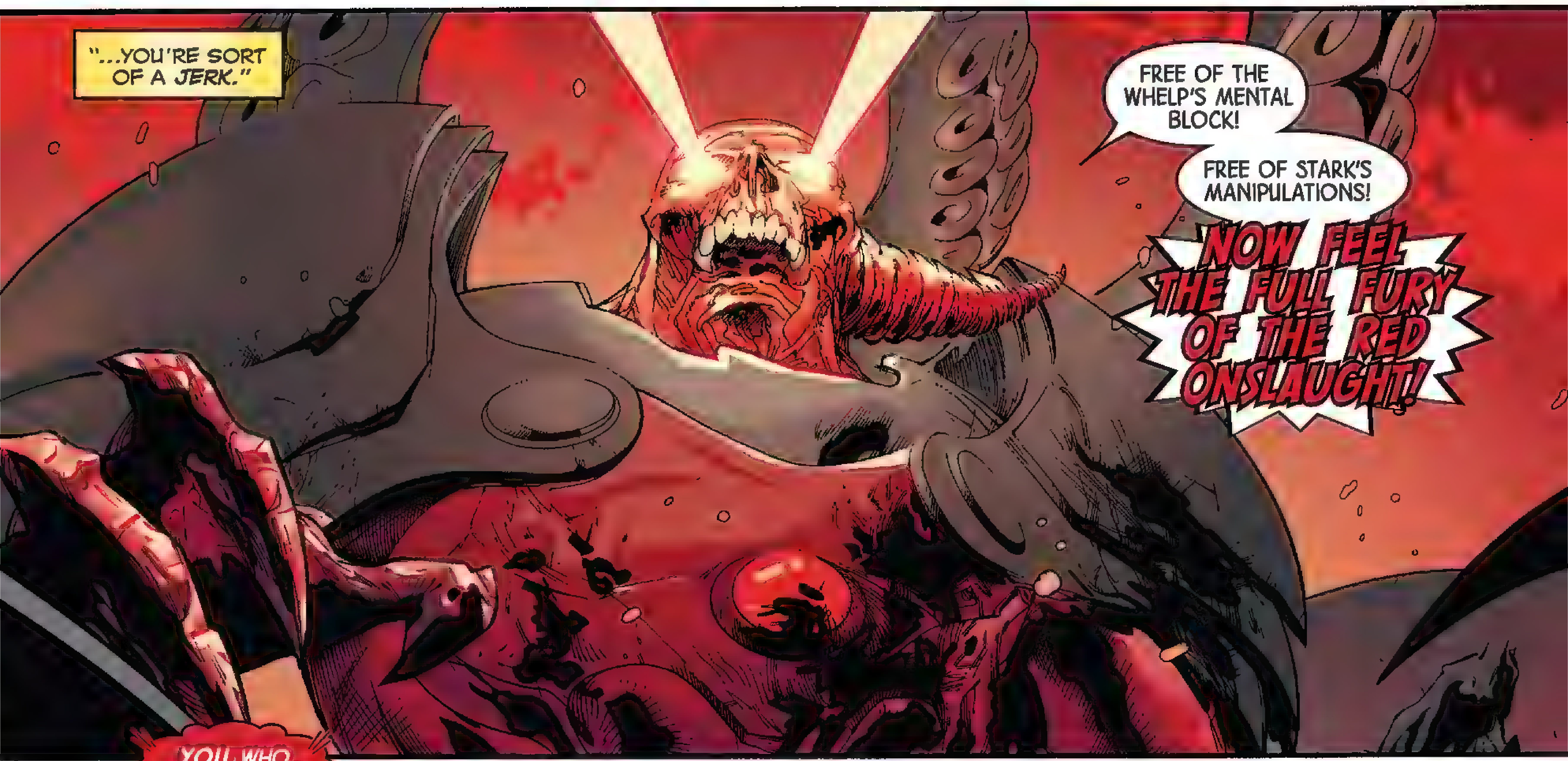
"...I'LL PUT A GOLD STAR ON YOUR CONFEDERATE MUDFLAP."
THAT BARBARIC BROADCAST OF YOURS WAS *VERY* RUDE, MY PET.
RUINED WHAT *WAS* A PLEASANT EVENING.
FORGIVE ME...
WOULD YOU *SERVE* ME?
YES!
THAT WOULD MAKE YOU HAPPY? TO SERVE ME, TO BE MY LOYAL *DOG?*
ANYTHING TO BE NEAR YOU!
PERHAPS I WILL KEEP YOU AS A TOY THEN.
THE BEAST THAT LAID LOW THOR IN THE PALM OF MY HAND--WE WILL SHAPE THIS WORLD TOGETHER--TO MY LIKING.
A SENTINEL--!
DREEEEE
BEHIND YOU, MY LOVE--!

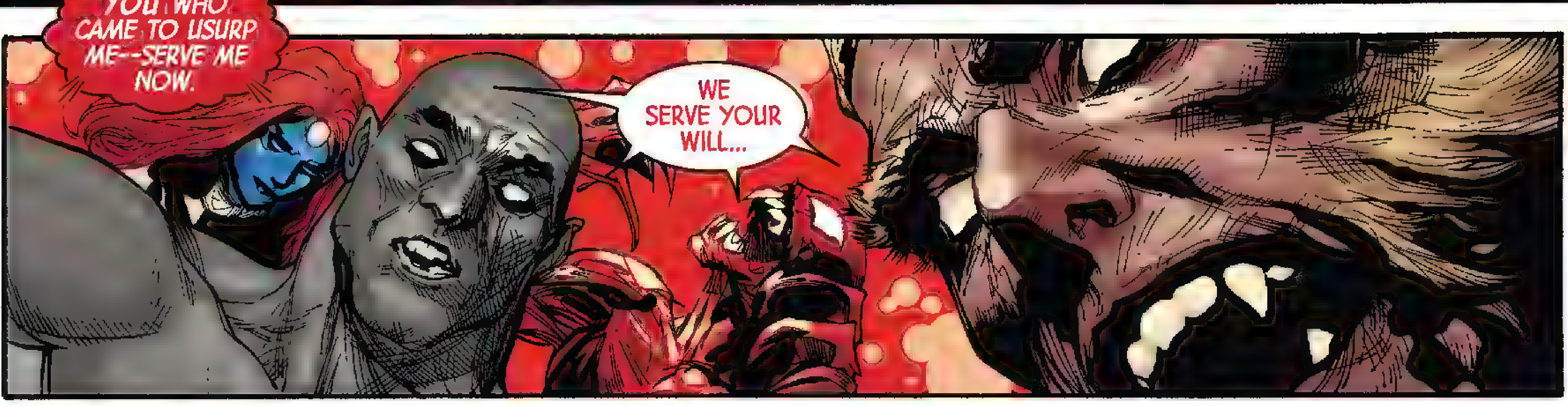
KROOOOM
RIDLEY SCOTT, EAT YER HEART OUT!
CURSE IT! MY SPELL IS--
KRAKK
OOF--
BROKEN, YOU CONTEMPTIBLE SOW.
THERE IS NO ROOM FOR YOU IN MY REICH ETERNAL!
YOU MONGRELS WILL DIE-- BUT FIRST YOU WILL SUFFER!
GHRAGH--!
KWOOOOM
WANDA, STRANGE-- HURRY!
→KOFF← →KOFF← HOW...?
I'VE MANAGED TO OPEN YOUR CAGES, NO TIME TO FREE THE OTHERS--

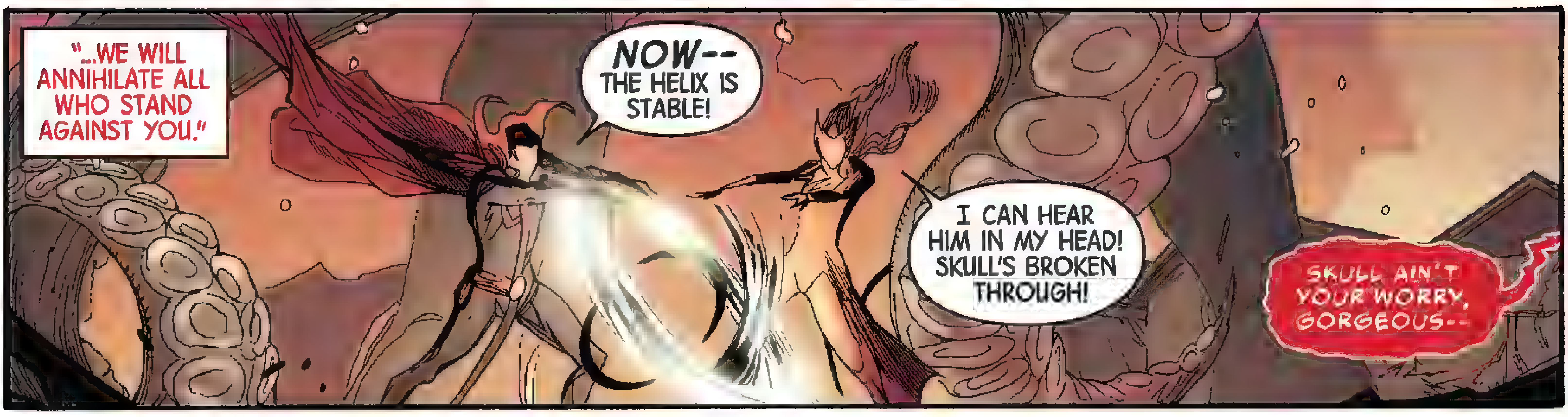
--CAN YOU STILL MANAGE THE INVERSION SPELL?!
YES... YES, WE CAN.
BUT IT WILL LEAVE US DEFENSELESS AGAIN.
SO WE NEED SOMEONE TO COMPETENTLY PROTECT US.
WHAT IS THIS ARMY OF CUTTHROATS AND CRIMINALS DOING HERE?
WHAT THE HELL HAVE YOU DONE, MAGNETO?!
I MADE THE ONLY CHOICE LEFT TO BE MADE--
"--I COMPROMISED."
I--I CAN'T DO IT, EVAN...
CAN'T STOP THE NAZI'S TELEPATHY ANYMORE...
JUST A FEW MORE MINUTES-- YOU CAN DO IT.
PEOPLE THINK YOU AND I ARE BAD; THAT IT'S JUST IN US, THAT WE CAN'T CHOOSE--
--BUT YOU CAN PROVE THEM WRONG.
AND WHEN THIS IS OVER, EVERYONE WILL KNOW WHAT YOU DID HERE--
--THEY'LL KNOW THAT QUENTIN QUIRE SAVED THE WORLD.
"QUENTIN QUIRE, THE X-MAN WHO SAVED EARTH FROM THE RED SKULL..."
IT DOES...
SOUND...

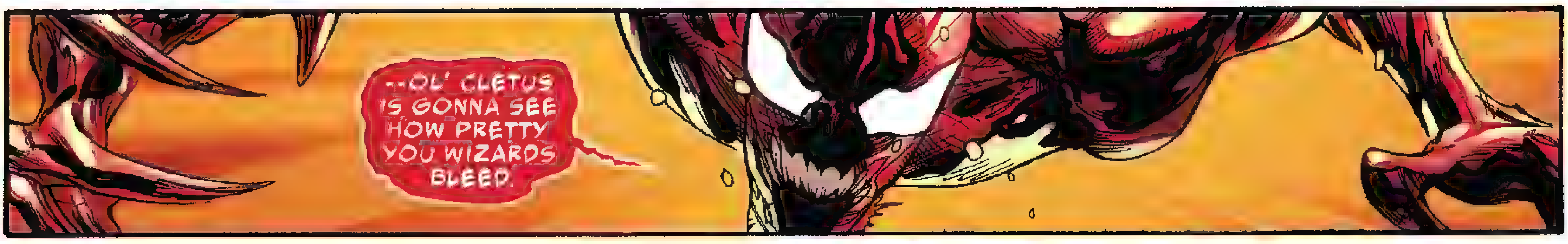
UTTERLY DELUSIONAL.
HE HAS PREVENTED *NOTHING*, BOY-- MERELY POSTPONED THE INEVITABLE--
--THE ONLY THING THE FUTURE HOLDS FOR YOUR ILK IS *DEATH*.
IT LOOKS LIKE YOU COULD USE ANOTHER SUPER PAL RIGHT NOW, SO...
SO, LISTEN, THERE'S SOMETHING I WANT TO ASK...
I KNOW THIS MIGHT NOT BE THE *BEST* TIME... IT'S JUST THAT, WELL...
PLEASE SHUT UP.
PLEASE.
WHADDA YA THINK? AVENGERS MATERIAL?
YOU'RE AN INSANE MERCENARY ZOMBIE MARRIED TO A VAMPIRE.
EVEN IF WE *WEREN'T* ABOUT TO BE WIPED OUT--
--EVEN IF THERE WAS GOING TO BE AN AVENGERS TEAM FOR YOU TO JOIN AFTER THIS--
--THE ANSWER WOULD STILL BE "NO."
YOU'LL *NEVER* BE AN AVENGER AS LONG AS I LIVE.
NOW FOR THE HUNDREDTH TIME, YOU MORON--
--WHERE THE HELL ARE YOU DRAGGING ME!


I...UH...
JUST THOUGHT I'D POWER YOU UP-- YOUR ARMOR.
CLASSIC TEAM-UP BUSINESS, HELPING YOU OUT EVEN THOUGH, YOU KNOW...


"...YOU'RE SORT OF A JERK."
FREE OF THE WHELP'S MENTAL BLOCK!
FREE OF STARK'S MANIPULATIONS!
NOW FEEL THE FULL FURY OF THE RED ONSLAUGHT!


YOU WHO CAME TO USURP ME--SERVE ME NOW.
WE SERVE YOUR WILL...


"...WE WILL ANNIHILATE ALL WHO STAND AGAINST YOU."
NOW-- THE HELIX IS STABLE!
I CAN HEAR HIM IN MY HEAD! SKULL'S BROKEN THROUGH!
SKULL AIN'T YOUR WORRY, GORGEOUS--


--OL' CLETUS IS GONNA SEE HOW PRETTY YOU WIZARDS BLEED.

I'LL KEEP YOU COVERED-- *CAST THE DAMN SPELL!*
GRAAAH--!
THANK YOU, EVAN! WE'RE ALMOST--
ALMOST.
ALMOST.
ALMOST--BUT NEVER QUITE *ENOUGH.*
YOUR SCHEME IS UNDONE.
YOU ARE FINALLY *MINE,* WITCH.
STRANGE I HAVE NO USE FOR.
I WILL REMOVE MYSELF FROM YOUR PRESENCE, MY LORD.
WAZOOOM
GHRAA--
AN' I'LL REMOVE THE WHELP!
♫ *THEN I SAW HER FACE--* ♫

--NOW I'M AN AVENGER!
I'M IN LOVE! OOOOOOO--I'M AN AVENGER, I COULDN'T AVENGE LESS IF I TRIED!
YERAGHH--!
GHA--NOW I'M GOING TO HAVE THAT DAMN SONG STUCK IN MY HEAD.
HEY, BUDDY.
MISS ME?
BET YOU DIDN'T MISS MY TELEPATHIC DAMPENER.
BER-DWOOOOOOOOSH
MY GUARDIAN ANGEL.
PROMISED I'D ALWAYS BE THERE FOR YOU.
EVEN IF IT WAS, YOU KNOW...A BIT OF A LUCK-OUT.
ONCE AGAIN IT FALLS TO DOOM TO SAVE THE WORLD.
RESUME YOUR SPELL, WITCH, AND I WILL CONJURE THE ORDER TO MATCH YOUR CHAOS.
EVEN AT A TIME LIKE THIS, DOOM, YOU'RE A VILE SIGHT. AND DON'T THINK FOR A SECOND THIS REDEEMS YOU FROM WHAT YOU DID TO ME.
YOUR FORGIVENESS MEANS NOTHING TO ME--
"--DOOM DOES NOT MOURN THE INSECTS HE STEPS ON."
GRAAAH--!

WHAT HAPPENED?
WHERE THE HELL IS DOOM?!

I DIDN'T EVEN KNOW HE WAS PART OF THE EQUATION, TONY.
HOW LONG WERE WE OUT?
DOOM WAS HERE?
I DIDN'T EVEN MAKE IT TO ROUND TWO...*THAT'S* CERTAINLY A BLOW TO THE EGO.
WHERE ARE THE VILLAINS?
I WAS OUT COLD FOR AT LEAST FIVE MINUTES AND WHEN I WOKE UP THEY WERE ALL--GONE.
EXCEPT THAT ANNOYANCE, DEADPOOL...
I'M, LIKE, *RIGHT* BEHIND YOU.
OUR FIRST PRIORITY IS FINDING THE RED SKULL. IF DOOM GOT HIS HANDS ON THE FIEND--
SKULL'S STILL HERE...
AND HE'S ALIVE.
I DON'T KNOW IF THAT GETS FILED UNDER GOOD OR BAD NEWS...
DEFINITELY *"BAD."*
IF THE INVERSION WORKED, THEN XAVIER'S PERSONALITY...
DEAR LORD...
COULD CHARLES BE IN THERE?
WAKE HIM! MAYBE HE'S--

WAKE HIM?!
ARE YOU PEOPLE INSANE?!
IT'S POSSIBLE XAVIER IS IN THERE, BUT UNTIL WE KNOW FOR CERTAIN, HE'S SAFER UNCONSCIOUS.
HE WILL BE HELD INSIDE AVENGERS TOWER.
ARE WE BACK HERE AGAIN?
AFTER EVERYTHING WE'VE BEEN THROUGH-- IF CHARLES COULD BE INSIDE THAT MONSTER, WE HAVE TO HELP HIM!
I HAVE TO HELP HIM! CAN YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT THIS MEANS TO ME?
THEY HAVEN'T COME ONE STEP CLOSER TO UNDERSTANDING ANYTHING ABOUT US.
I'M NOT LETTING YOU TAKE HIM, CYCLOPS.
END OF DEBATE.
BE REASONABLE, SAM!
IF THERE'S A CHANCE OF SAVING XAVIER, IT'S OUR RIGHT TO EXPLORE IT!
WE'LL TAKE HIM BACK TO THE SCHOOL.
QUENTIN AND EMMA CAN KEEP HIM IN CHECK IF--
NO.
THE RED SKULL IS A MURDERING PSYCHOPATH WHO JUST NEARLY DESTROYED THE WORLD.
HE'LL BE HELD IN AVENGERS TOWER BEFORE HE IS PUT ON TRIAL FOR HIS CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY.
THAT'S HOW IT IS.
WAIT A DAMNED MINUTE BEFORE YOU START TELLING ME HOW IT IS, "FALCON."
YOU'RE NOT IN CHARGE HERE. NEITHER YOU OR TONY GIVE ME ORDERS.
YOU MIGHT NOT LIKE TO ACKNOWLEDGE IT, BUT I'M A CO-LEADER OF THE AVENGERS. ANOINTED BY SIR STEVE ROGERS, YOUR PATRON SAINT OF AUTHORITY.

SPEAK OF THE DEVIL.
LET'S HEAR WHAT "SIR STEVE ROGERS, PATRON SAINT OF AUTHORITY," HAS TO SAY ABOUT IT, "CO-LEADER."
STEVE, WE'VE GOT A SITUATION.
LOOKS LIKE WE HAD A SITUATION.
AND IT LOOKS LIKE THE AVENGERS AND THE X-MEN UNITED TO STOP IT.
I'M DAMN PROUD OF YOU ALL.
IF WANDA'S INVERSION SPELL WORKED, THAT MEANS XAVIER'S BACK IN CONTROL.
AFTER ALL WE'VE BEEN THROUGH, THE LOSS OF CHARLES, THE LOSS OF LOGAN--THE SPLINTERING OF THE X-MEN ENTIRELY--
WE NEED HIM BACK, STEVE.
IF HE'S IN THERE--
IF HE'S IN THERE, WE'LL GET HIM OUT, ALEX.
YOU HAVE MY WORD ON THAT.
BUT RIGHT NOW ALL WE KNOW IS THAT HE'S THE MOST DANGEROUS PERSON IN THE WORLD.
ALLOW US TO TAKE SKULL TO AVENGERS TOWER. PLEASE, STAND DOWN.
STAND DOWN?! AFTER EVERYTHING I'VE BEEN THROUGH--
IT DOESN'T MATTER ANYMORE, ALEX.

WHATEVER'S LEFT IN THERE *ISN'T* YOUR MENTOR.
JUST RESIDUE.
EVAN...? LITTLE GUY? CHAMI-TAMMI-TANGO?
MY LITTLE SALTY WADDLER.
YOU GOT ALL JACKED!
WHERE DO YOU LIFT, BRODIDLY?
IS IT WEIRD I'M HUGGING YOU?
I WOULDN'T DO IT AGAIN.
JEEZ. ALRIGHT, MOOD SWING.
PUBERTY JUST SNUCK RIGHT UP ON YOU, HUH?

PROFESSOR XAVIER IS DEAD.
LET THEM HAVE THIS NAZI, HE ISN'T THE ANSWER TO ANY OF OUR PROBLEMS.
YEAH? AND I SUPPOSE YOU KNOW WHO IS?
I HAVE AN IDEA.
FINE.
WE'LL STEP ASIDE--BUT WITH ONE CONDITION.
NAME IT.
ACCEPT MY **RESIGNATION** AS AN AVENGER AND FORGET I WAS **EVER** YOUR **FIGUREHEAD.**
LOOKS LIKE BY *"UNITY"* YOU MEANT WE FOLLOW YOUR WAY, WE DO AS YOU SAY.
THAT'S **NOT** UNITY, STEVE--
--THAT'S **TYRANNY.**
I THOUGHT YOU OF ALL PEOPLE WOULD KNOW THE DIFFERENCE.
BUT I CAN SEE NOW--
--SCOTT WAS RIGHT ABOUT YOU.
I'M GOING **HOME,** JANET...
ALEX-- WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!
YOU CAN'T THROW AWAY **EVERYTHING.**
DON'T BE A FOOL!

...THIS FOOL CLEARLY MADE A MISTAKE TRUSTING YOU.
JUST LIKE ANY TIME THE X-MEN TRUST THE AVENGERS.

4
AXIS

ALTERED BEAST

INVERSION: CHAPTER 1

S.H.I.E.L.D. HELICARRIER ILIAD.
ABOVE THE ATLANTIC OCEAN.
THE STARK SENTINELS HAVE BEEN COLLECTED AND ARE BEING DISMANTLED.
SKULL'S CAMPS IN GENOSHA HAVE BEEN TORN DOWN.
ALL OF HIS PRISONERS HAVE BEEN EVACUATED, TAKEN TO HOSPITALS OR RETURNED TO THEIR HOMES.
WE'RE OFFERING TRAUMA SUPPORT TO ANY WHO REQUEST IT.
WORLD WAR HATE HAS BEEN NEUTRALIZED.
YEP.
NOW THE HEALING, OR SO THE CLICHE GOES.
CAP, THIS IS ONE OF THE *UGLIEST* THINGS WE'VE ENCOUNTERED GOING BACK AS FAR AS I CAN REMEMBER.
BUT YOU *DID* IT.
AND NOW IT'S TIME TO HAND THE RED SKULL OVER.
THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY APPRECIATES WHAT THE AVENGERS DID, BUT NO ONE IS COMFORTABLE WITH LEAVING THE RED SKULL IN YOUR CARE.
NICE AND SUBTLE APPROACH TO THE ELEPHANT IN THE ROOM, MARIA.
WE DON'T HAVE TIME FOR *SUBTLE*, FURY.
THIS *"ELEPHANT"* HAS THE *UNGODLY* PSYCHIC POWERS OF CHARLES XAVIER.
WE'VE BUILT A SPECIAL CONTAINMENT FACILITY TO DEAL WITH HIM.

YOU'RE RIGHT, DIRECTOR HILL--RED SKULL'S THE MOST POWERFUL, MOST DERANGED MONSTER WE'VE EVER ENCOUNTERED.
ALL THE MORE REASON HE'LL STAY IN AVENGERS TOWER AND NOT IN SOME RINKY-DINK S.H.I.E.L.D. PRISON.
RINKY-DINK?
ARE YOU TRYING TO PUSH MY BUTTONS, WILSON?
I DON'T *CARE* ABOUT YOUR BUTTONS, FURY.
TONY STARK DEVISED A WAY TO KEEP SKULL'S BRAINWAVES TURNED OFF, LOCKED UP IN THE HEART OF AVENGERS TOWER SURROUNDED BY EARTH'S MIGHTIEST HEROES.
WE'VE GOT SKULL--*HE'S SAFE.*
NEXT TOPIC.
TONY STARK? THE SAME TONY STARK WHO BUILT THE SKULL'S *SENTINELS?*
THE SAME TONY STARK WHO HASN'T BEEN SEEN FOR ALMOST TWO WEEKS?
GOT TO BE HONEST WITH YOU, SAM, A PRISONER OF WAR BEING HELD BY A PRIVATE ORGANIZATION...
THIS JUST ISN'T HOW THINGS ARE DONE.
MAYBE THEM RIGHT, CAP.
MAYBE IT BETTER IF WE HAND HIM OVER--
I'VE MADE *MY* DECISION.
AND I *DIDN'T* INVITE DISCUSSION.

LOOK, I KNOW YOU'VE BEEN THROUGH A LOT AND EVERYBODY'S NERVES ARE A BIT... FRAYED.
BUT THIS ATTITUDE...LET'S JUST ALL GO BACK TO ZERO, OKAY?
LET ME MAKE SOMETHING PERFECTLY CLEAR TO YOU, FURY.
I DON'T WORK FOR YOU.
YOU'RE OUT OF LINE, SAM.
COMPORT YOURSELF IN A MANNER BEFITTING YOUR STATION--
MY STATION?!
TWOKK
YOU'VE GOT ME MIXED UP WITH STEVE.
I'M NOT THAT CAPTAIN AMERICA.
C'MON, HULK--WE'RE DONE HERE.

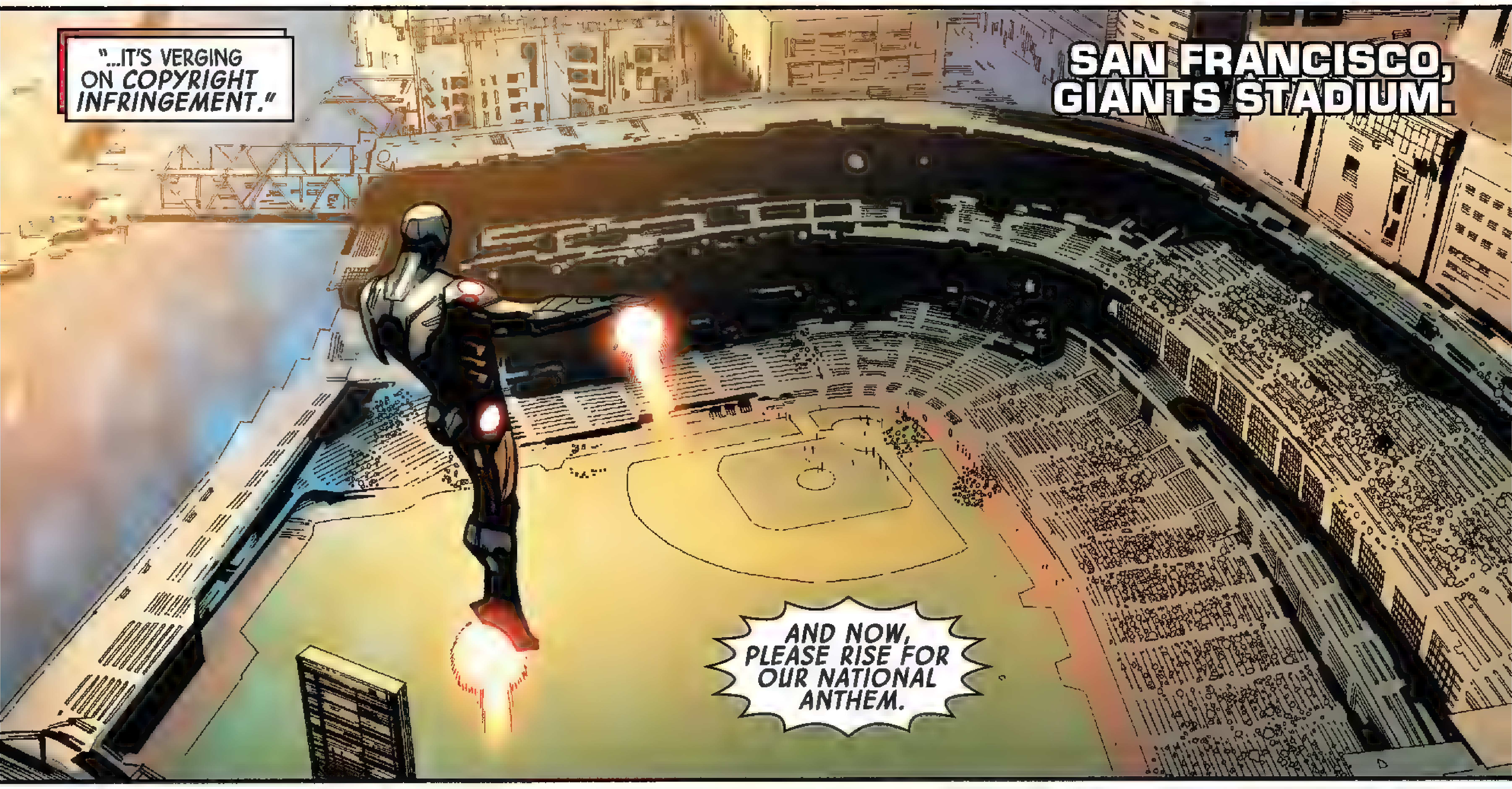
SCARLET WITCH, IT'S CAP.
I'M HERE, SAM.
CALL A MEETING. WE'VE GOT A SITUATION.
AND, WANDA, ONE OTHER THING...
"...DON'T TELL ROGERS."
BUSHWICK, BROOKLYN.
ALL UNITS, GET INTO POSITION.
MOVE IN ON MY COMMAND.
POLICE
ALL RIGHT, SQUID--THROW YOUR WEAPONS OUT THE WINDOW AND COME OUT WITH YOUR HANDS UP!
YOU ALREADY BOTCHED THE BANK ROBBERY--KIDNAPPING AN INNOCENT FAMILY IS ONLY GOING TO MAKE MATTERS WORSE!
WHO DO YOU THINK YOU'RE TALKING TO?
WE'RE NOT GOIN' ANYWHERE, YOU SILLY SCAMP!
WELL, MY TENTACLES, GUESS WE'RE GONNA HAVE TO SEND OUT A BODY TO SHOW WE MEAN BUSINESS!
ON IT, BOSS.
BRAKKA BRAKKA BRAKKA

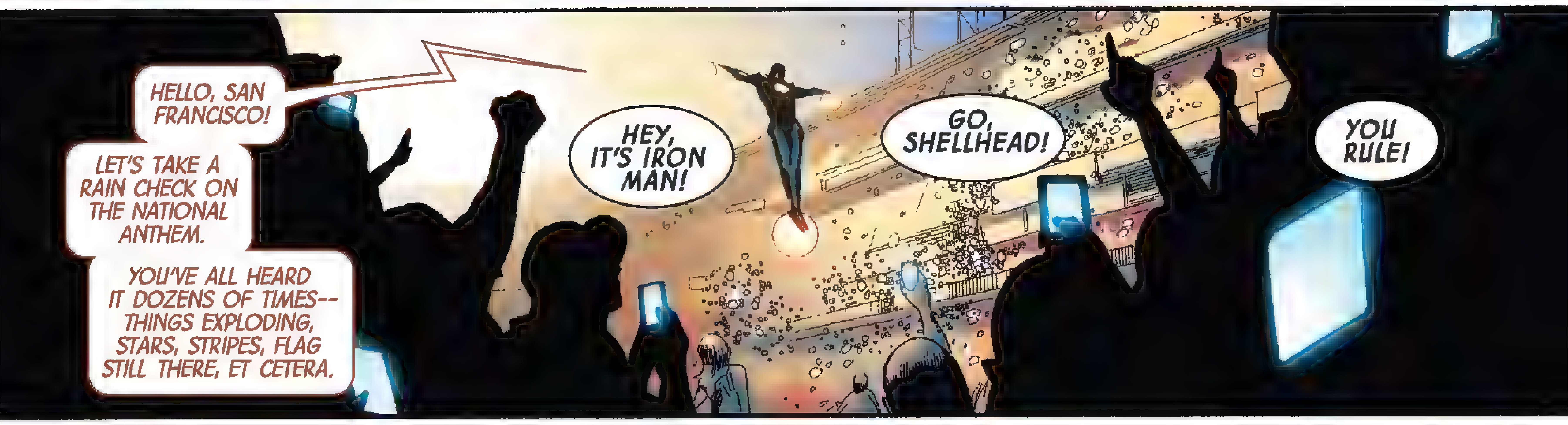
COMMAND, WE'RE TAKING FIRE DOWN HERE! THE SQUID AND HIS GANG THE TENTACLES HAVE TAKEN A FAMILY HOSTAGE.
REQUEST IMMEDIATE BACKUP!
PING
STING
ZING
7034
NYPD
2
HOLD ON, COMMAND...
...HELP'S ARRIVED.
DO THE OLD MAN.
SEEMS LIKE THE MOST HUMANE CHOICE THAT'LL STILL GET THE PIGS' ATTENTION.
NO! PLEASE!
ANYTHING, JUST DON'T HURT MY FAMILY--!

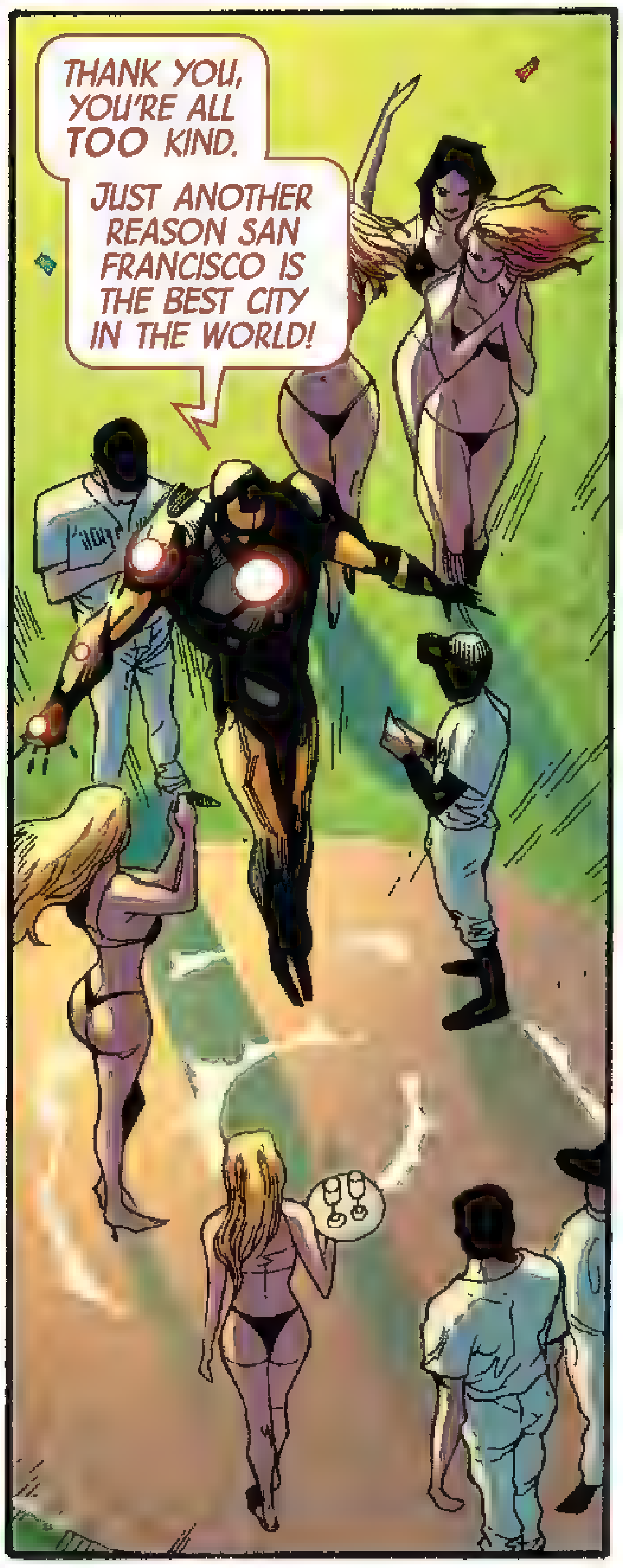
SOUNDS LIKE A JOB FOR "CARNAGE FAMILY PROTECTIVE SERVICES"!
KRASH
LORD KNOWS I COULD HAVE USED A PAL LIKE ME GROWIN' UP.
PA WAS SOMETHING OF A DRINKER, Y'SEE.
GHA--!
WUMP
YOU TRYING TO STEAL MY TAKE, KASADY?!
WELL, YOU'RE TRYING TO PULL ONE ON THE WRONG DUDE-- *THE SQUID DON'T ROLL OVER!*
THAT'S MORE OF A DOG TRICK ANYW--
WHOK
GRAB THE KID!
WE'LL USE HIM AS A SHIELD ON THE WAY OUT!
NO!

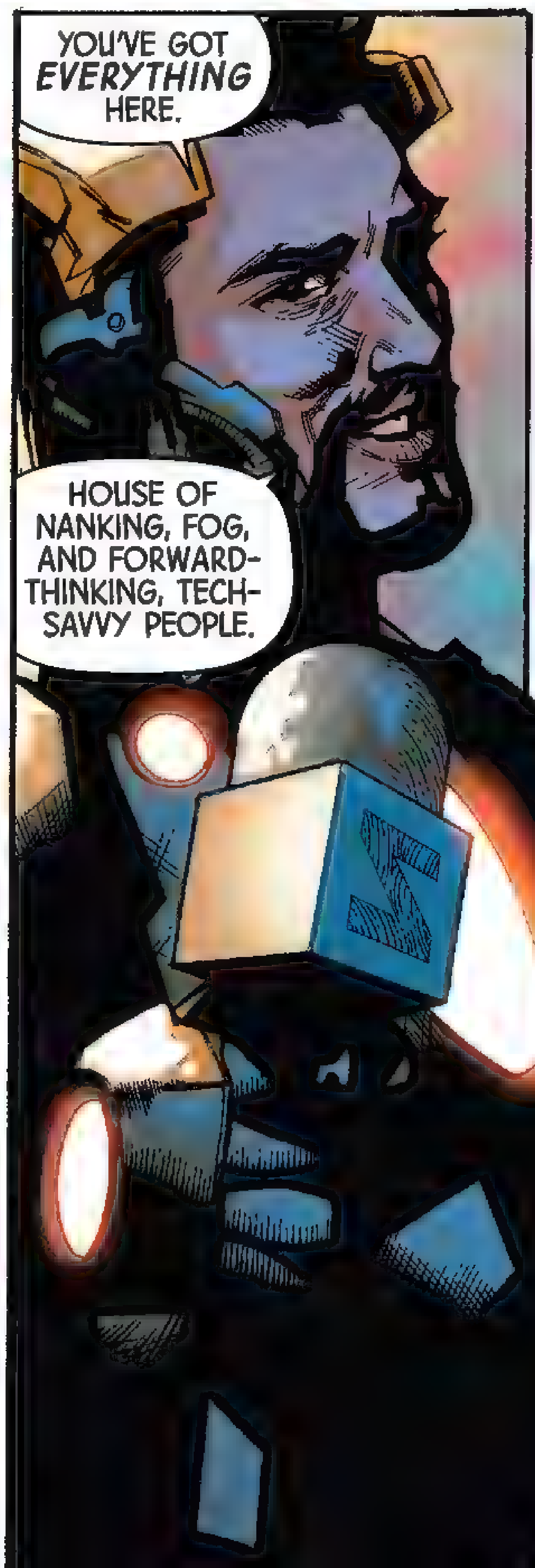
DAD'S RIGHT, YOU DUMMY. YOU USE THE MOM, KIDS'RE TOO SMALL--COPS'D SNIPE YA FER SURE.
TWIPP
ONE TO GROW ON FROM YER PAL, COURAGEOUS CARNAGE.
HMMH--THAT NAME DOESN'T SOUND AS GOOD WHEN I SAY IT OUT LOUD.
TWUDD
EVERYTHING'S GOING TO BE ALL RIGHT, LITTLE GUY.
DON'T YOU FRET NONE
NOW.
"...WHO'S FIRST TO GIVE UNCLE CARNAGE A BIG OL' HERO'S HUG?"
WHAT'S GOING ON, CHIEF?
PANDEMONIUM.
THE SQUID HOLDING A FAMILY HOSTAGE--THEN CARNAGE WENT BUSTING IN.
I AM PREPARING A SWAT UNIT--
IF CARNAGE IS IN THERE, THEY'LL ALL BE DEAD BY THEN, CHIEF.

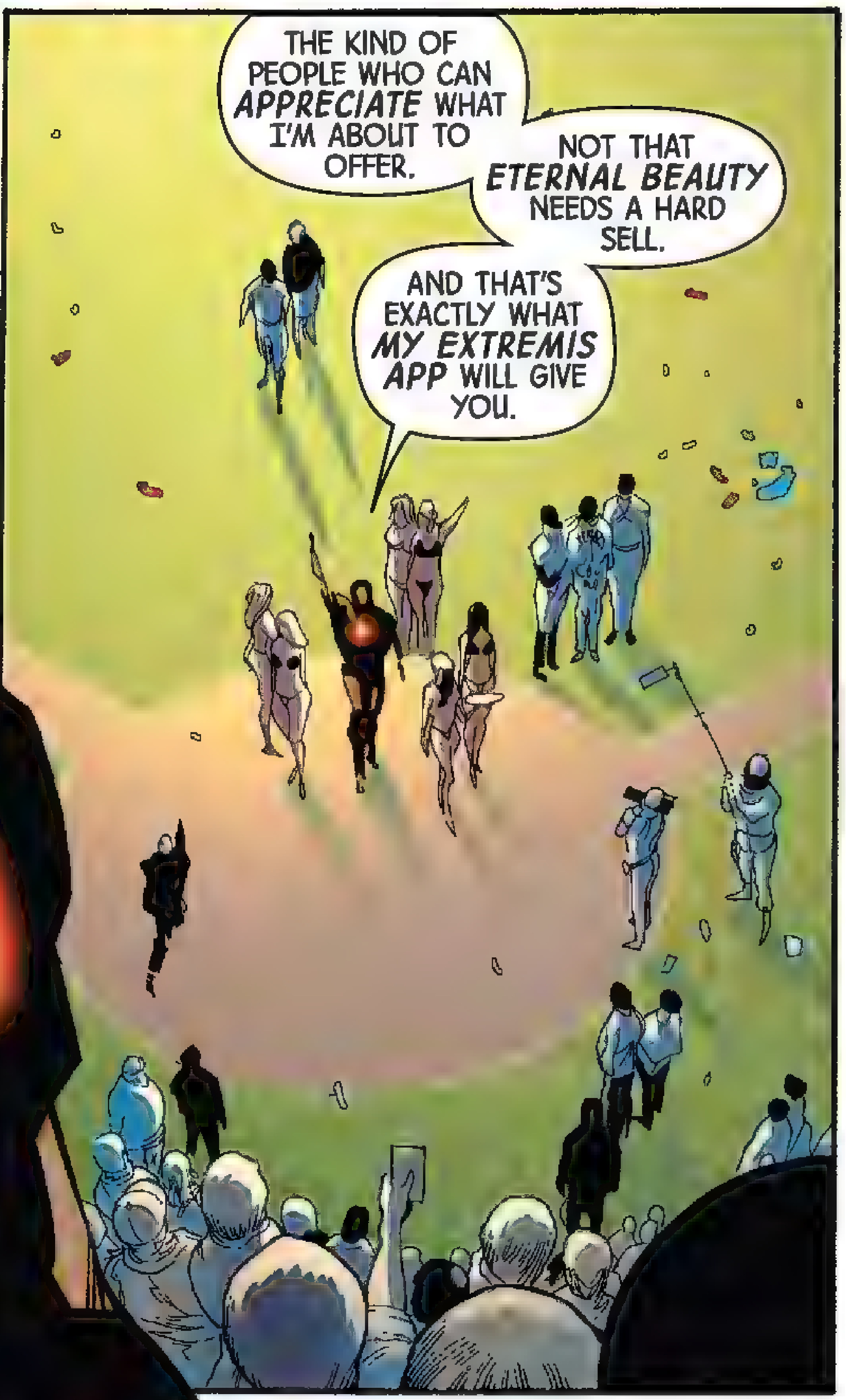
SPIDER-MAN!
OKAY. THIS ISN'T WHAT I EXPECTED.
WHERE'S CARNAGE?
LUNATIC'S GONE.
DIDN'T EVEN TAKE THE HAUL.
NOBODY'S DEAD, HE DIDN'T TAKE THE MONEY, YOU AND YOUR GANG ARE WEBBED UP...
YOU *SURE* IT WAS CARNAGE?
HE LEFT YA A NOTE.
FROM YOUR FRIENDLY NEIGHBORHOOD CARNAGE!
NOW THAT IS *REALLY* DISTURBING...


"...IT'S VERGING ON *COPYRIGHT INFRINGEMENT.*"
SAN FRANCISCO, GIANTS STADIUM.
AND NOW, PLEASE RISE FOR OUR NATIONAL ANTHEM.


HELLO, SAN FRANCISCO!
LET'S TAKE A RAIN CHECK ON THE NATIONAL ANTHEM.
YOU'VE ALL HEARD IT DOZENS OF TIMES-- THINGS EXPLODING, STARS, STRIPES, FLAG STILL THERE, ET CETERA.
HEY, IT'S IRON MAN!
GO, SHELLHEAD!
YOU RULE!


THANK YOU, YOU'RE ALL TOO KIND.
JUST ANOTHER REASON SAN FRANCISCO IS THE BEST CITY IN THE WORLD!


YOU'VE GOT *EVERYTHING* HERE.
HOUSE OF NANKING, FOG, AND FORWARD-THINKING, TECH-SAVVY PEOPLE.


THE KIND OF PEOPLE WHO CAN *APPRECIATE* WHAT I'M ABOUT TO OFFER.
NOT THAT *ETERNAL BEAUTY* NEEDS A HARD SELL.
AND THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT *MY EXTREMIS APP* WILL GIVE YOU.

MORE THAN JUST BEAUTY, THE NEW EXTREMIS APP CAN MAKE YOU INTO YOUR *IDEAL SELF.*
NO MORE BEING TRAPPED IN A BODY YOU'RE ASHAMED OF!
DO AWAY WITH THE SLIGHTEST IMPERFECTION!
NEVER AGE!
YOU CAN BE WHOEVER YOU WANT.
IT'S JUST A THOUGHT AWAY.
THIS ISN'T A SALES PITCH.
THE APP IS ALREADY ON YOUR SMART PHONES-- IT'S TOTALLY FREE.
PEOPLE OF SAN FRANCISCO, I BRING YOU, AND *ONLY* YOU, THIS MIRACULOUS GIFT.
COMPLETELY OPTIONAL, NO ONE HAS TO PARTICIPATE IF THEY DON'T WANT TO.
MIND YOU, YOU'D BE CRAZY.
BUT, HEY, SOME PEOPLE LIKE BEING IMPERFECT.

TODAY IS THE DAY MANKIND STEPS CLOSER TO A BRIGHT NEW TOMORROW!
IF NOT BRIGHT, AT LEAST MUCH BETTER LOOKING.
WHAT ARE YOU *DOING*, STARK?
FINALLY YOUR OUTWARD APPEARANCE CAN REFLECT WHO YOU ARE *WITHIN*.
SO WITHOUT FURTHER DELAY--
LET'S GET THIS PARTY STARTED!
I MISSED YOU TOO, SWEETHEART.

THE JEAN GREY SCHOOL FOR HIGHER LEARNING.
MY FELLOW MUTANTS, WE STAND TOGETHER, A UNITED FAMILY, AFTER HALTING YET *ANOTHER* HUMAN ATTEMPT TO *ERADICATE* OUR SPECIES.
THANKS TO THE BRAVERY OF AND BLOOD SPILLED BY THE X-MEN HERE WITH ME-- *WE HAVE OVERCOME.*
WE HAVE DEFEATED THE HUMAN RED SKULL, THE MAN WHO SO *GROTESQUELY* DEFILED OUR DEAR CHARLES XAVIER.
I THOUGHT YOU SAID *YOU* SAVED THE DAY AND DEFEATED THE RED SKULL, QUENTIN.
I *DID,* IDIE.
LIAR.
WE'VE BEEN WARNED OF CAMPS LIKE THE ONES WE ENCOUNTERED IN GENOSHA.
WARNED THAT WE MUTANTS WOULD BE HERDED UP INTO SUCH A GHETTO.
BUT WE HOPE FOR A *BETTER* FUTURE, WE FIGHT FOR COHABITATION AGAINST ALL EVIDENCE BEFORE US.
CHARLES XAVIER IS *GONE.*
WOLVERINE IS *DEAD.*
OUR NUMBERS *DWINDLE,* OUR STRENGTH *DIMINISHED,* AS WE SPLINTER INTO WARRING FACTIONS OF PETULANT CHILDREN.
WE CAN AFFORD THIS INTERNAL STRIFE *NO LONGER.*

WE WILL NO LONGER *ADD* TO THE TURMOIL WE FACE.
WE WILL NOT FIGHT ONE ANOTHER WHILE THE HUMANS KILL US OFF ONE AT A TIME!
IT IS TIME THE X-MEN STOOD TOGETHER!
TIME WE TOOK THE *INITIATIVE* AND STRIKE FIRST IN THE *WAR* THEY HAVE WAGED ON US!
THE DREAM OF ONE PEOPLE UNITED ON THE EARTH IS *DEAD.*
I HAVE SPENT THE LAST FEW YEARS OF MY LIFE FIGHTING TO BRIDGE THE GAP BETWEEN MUTANTS AND HUMANS AND I CAN TELL YOU NOW--
--IT IS *IMPOSSIBLE.*
THIS WORLD UNDERSTANDS ONLY *ONE* TRUTH.
NATURE FOLLOWS ONLY *ONE* LAW...

SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST.
"THE X-MEN HAVE AMASSED AN ARMY."

APOCALYPSE HAS RISEN.
THEIR FURY AT A FERVOR.
WAR WILL SOON BE UPON US.
THEY'LL SOON REALIZE THEIR FOLLY--THEY ARE GOING TO COME FOR THE RED SKULL.
LET THEM COME.
WE GAIN NOTHING FROM WAR WITH THE X-MEN.
IT DOESN'T SERVE MY INTERESTS--I KNOW THAT MUCH.
NOR MINE. SOMETHING HAPPENED ON GENOSHA--SOMETHING WONDERFUL.
A FOG WAS LIFTED--I'VE BEEN LIBERATED OF THE TERRIBLE LIFELONG AFFLICTION OF PUTTING OTHERS' NEEDS AHEAD OF MY OWN.
AND I'LL WAGER THE REST OF YOU FEEL IT AS WELL.
AYE! TIS A GREAT AWAKENING UPON US--ONE I WILL FIGHT TO PRESERVE.
BETTER FOR MY FELLOW INHUMANS THAT I REMAIN UNENCUMBERED, FREE TO DO WHAT MUST BE DONE.
IF ANYONE OBTAINS THE SKULL, HE COULD BE USED AGAINST US--OUR LIBERATION UNDONE.
SO, WE HIDE RED SKULL?
THERE'S AN EASIER WAY FORWARD, HULK.

WE KILL HIM.
ONCE AND FOR ALL.
IT'S THE ONLY WAY TO ENSURE HE CAN'T UNDO THINGS.
MORE THAN THAT--IF THERE IS SOME PART OF XAVIER STILL IN THERE, HE'D JOIN UP WITH THE FREAKS.
KILLING HIM IS THE BEST WAY TO GUARANTEE THEY CAN'T USE HIM AGAINST US.
WE'LL PRESENT IT TO THE X-MEN AS AN OFFERING.
AN EXECUTION, FOR WHAT HE DID TO POOR XAVIER AND THE MUTANTS.
THEY WON'T BUY IT FOR A SECOND.
NO. BUT IT'LL BE TOO LATE. THEIR PRIZE GONE.
SHOULD THEY STILL DESIRE WAR, THEN WE WILL FREELY SLAUGHTER EVERY ONE OF THEM...

"...THEY WILL SEE WHAT IT TRULY MEANS TO BE HUNTED."
THIS IS MADNESS!
THIS CANNOT ACTUALLY BE YOUR SOLUTION!
STEP ASIDE, JARVIS.
EVIL ONLY EVER BEGETS MORE EVIL!
THE AVENGERS ARE NOT EXECUTIONERS--YOU ARE DEFENDERS OF LIFE!
TELL ME, JARVIS, WHAT IN THIS WORLD COULD WE DO THAT WOULD SAVE MORE LIVES THAN KILLING THE RED SKULL?
WHAT HAPPENED THE LAST TIME SOMEONE CHOSE KILLING HIM AS THE SOLUTION?
WHAT PSYCHIC ENERGIES HE'S ACTUALLY COMPOSED OF--THERE'S NO WAY TO KNOW WHAT WOULD HAPPEN, SAMUEL!
I WON'T LET YOU--!
WE DO NOT REQUIRE YOUR BLESSING, OLD MAN.
GHRAGH--!
LET'S GET IT OVER WITH.
GOOD FRIEND JARVIS, AM HURT? AM OKAY?
THANK YOU, HULK, BUT I AM NOT.
PLEASE--YOU MUST STOP THEM.

JARVIS GOOD FRIEND-- HIM RIGHT!
AVENGERS NO HURT-- AVENGERS NO KILL!
WE ARE KILLING TODAY, YOU GIANT DULLARD.
SO EITHER STEP THE HEL OUT OF THE WAY--
--OR WE'LL MOVE YOU OUT OF THE WAY!
DWOOOOM
NOW JUST STAY DOWN, DUMMY.
OR PERHAPS THERE WILL BE TWO BODIES IN NEED OF BURIAL.
FRIENDS WOULD NOT DO THAT TO HULK.
WOULD NOT HIT HULK.
MAKES HULK SAD...
YOU WOULDN'T LIKE WHEN HULK IS SAD--

THAT'S WHEN KLUH COMES OUT!
HULK--?
PUNY HULK IS GONE, SWEETS. I'M THE REAL DEAL, AIN'T BORN OF BANNER'S WEAK RAGE--
--I'M THE HULK'S HULK!
I'VE BEEN WATCHIN' YOU PEOPLE, LISTENIN' TO YER GARBAGE FER YEARS.
OL' JARVIS WAS WRONG.
PROBLEM AIN'T THAT YOU'RE BEING SELFISH AND ROTTEN--
--YOU JUST AIN'T HALF ROTTEN ENOUGH!
GWAOOOOOOM

WITCH-- HIT HIM HARD!
WHATEVER THIS HULK WITHIN THE HULK IS-- I WANT IT DEAD!
YEAH! NOW THAT'S THE STUFF WHAT I'M LOOKIN' FOR, LI'L PATRIOT! THE PARTY TIMES!
C'MON-- SHOW ME SOMETHIN', SWEETHEART!
A PORTAL TO THE WELL SOURCE OF ALL CHAOS WILL REND THE FETID FLESH FROM YOUR--
TRY HARDER!
AGH--!
TAKEN DUMPS HARDER THAN YOU LOT.
TWOOOM
KROOOOM
THAT GREEN PUKE, THAT SAD PIECE OF "DOC GREEN'S" ID--
ALL THAT CONFUSED IDIOT EVER WANTED WAS TO BE LEFT ALONE.
ME--ALL I WANT IS TO BATHE IN THE BLOOD OF THE INNOCENT.
KLUH GONNA RUT AND ROLL IN SOME SWEET DESTRUCTION!

UH...
SHOULD WE GO AFTER HIM?
UNLESS HE STANDS IN OUR WAY, LET'S STAY *OUT* OF HIS.
HE IS *NO* CONCERN OF OURS.
THIS, HOWEVER, *IS*...
ODIN'S BLOOD.
THE RED SKULL HAS ESCAPED.

5
AXIS

SOMETHING CLEARLY WENT WRONG

INVERSION: CHAPTER 2

AVENGERS TOWER.
HEY, SPIDEY!
"SPIDEY" IS A BIT FAMILIAR, KID.
ER...I MEAN, SPIDER-MAN.
MR. SPIDERTON ESQUIRE THE THIRD IS WHAT NEWBIES CALL ME, SON.
OH, UM, WELL, I'M NOT TOTALLY NEW, I'VE BEEN DOING THIS, YOU KNOW...
...FOR A WHILE NOW.
I'M JUST HAZING YOU, NOVA. IT'S WHAT THE OLD GUARD DOES TO ASSERT DOMINANCE.
LIGHTEN UP. GOTTA HAVE A SENSE OF HUMOR TO SURVIVE THE DOUR TONE THIS LIFE TENDS TO CAST.
HA-- OKAY.
YOU KNOW, THE DUDE WHO WORE THAT HELMET BEFORE YOU WAS A GOOD GUY, NAME WAS RICHARD RIDER.
THERE'S A JOKE IN THERE IF YOU THINK ON IT.
BUT SERIOUSLY, HE LEFT SOME BIG SHOES TO FILL--AND YOU'RE DOING GREAT.
WOW. THANKS.
I'M JUST SUPER FLATTERED THE AVENGERS INVITED ME. I MEAN--THIS IS BIG! EVERY SINGLE AVENGER CALLED TO A MEETING, MUST BE IMPORTANT!
SUCH YOUTHFUL EAGERNESS.
GIVE IT TIME. ALL YOU NEED IS A SOUL-SUCKING SYMBIOTE OR A MEDIA OUTLET DEDICATED TO SMEARING YOUR GOOD NAME...

...AND THAT ENTHUSIASM WILL FADE *QUICKLY.*
BUT, HEY--WE THROW COLORFUL COSTUME PARTIES, SO IT'S NOT ALL BAD.
JUST...DON'T LOOK AT THE FACT THAT WE ALL WEAR BRIGHT AND FRILLY UNIFORMS TOO CLOSELY OR IT'LL MAKE US ALL SEEM LIKE *WEIRDOS.*
I THINK THE COSTUMES ARE KINDA *NEAT.*
SURE YOU DO.
AND YOU'RE LIKE, WHAT, THIRTEEN YEARS OLD? SO THAT'S *OKAY.*
BUT TAKE THIS DUDE RIGHT HERE FOR EXAMPLE.
HAWKEYE'S LIKE *THIRTY-SIX* AND DRESSED UP IN A *PURPLE JUMPER!*
SAID THE LOUD-MOUTHED *MAN-CHILD* IN THE BRIGHT RED *LEOTARD.*
COSTUME ENVY.
HE CHANGES HIS EVERY FEW YEARS, WHILE MY LEOTARD REMAINS *TIMELESS.*
HEH.
...IT'S *TRIFLING* BEING ON BOTH TEAMS. CONTRARIAN *MORONS* IN BOTH CAMPS SEEKING--
ENOUGH. *I TIRE* OF THIS ONE-SIDED CONVERSATION, McCOY.
DO WE HAVE ANY IDEA WHAT THE PURPOSE OF THIS IDIOT MEETING IS?
WHERE THE *HELL* IS ROGERS?
STEVE ISN'T RUNNING THIS SHOW...

...I AM.
I APPRECIATE YOU ALL FALLING IN LINE.
I KNOW THESE PRIORITY ALERTS ARE INCONVENIENT--AND YOU *IMAGINE* YOUR WORK IMPORTANT--BUT THIS PROBLEM REQUIRES *IMMEDIATE* ACTION--
THE RED SKULL HAS ESCAPED.
AFTER WHAT WE WENT THROUGH ON GENOSHA THAT'S BAD NEWS TO *MOST* OF YOU.
BUT NOT *ALL* OF YOU.
SECURITY LOGS SHOW SOMEONE WITH AVENGERS-LEVEL CLEARANCE ACCESSED HIS CELL.
THE SAME PERSON ERASED THE SECURITY FOOTAGE.
LEADING ME TO BELIEVE--
--ONE OF *YOU* AIDED HIM.
VERILY SO.
IS THIS A JOKE?
WE SHOULDN'T HAVE COME HERE.
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT--
WHEN I BECAME CAPTAIN AMERICA, I SWORE TO PROTECT *EVERYONE.*
THAT INCLUDED *MYSELF.*
THERE ARE SIMPLY *TOO* MANY OF YOU TO DETERMINE *WHO* WAS RESPONSIBLE.

AND FRANKLY--
SOMETHING'S WRONG!
--YOU'RE ALL A LIABILITY TO ME.
BREEP
ALL MUCH SAFER LOCKED UP IN HANK PYM'S SUBATOMIC ANT FARM.
WHAT?!
MOVE!
KRESHSHH
WHAT WAS THAT?!
THEY ALL JUST DISAPPEARED!
WHAT JUST HAPPENED?!
NOT NOW, KID.

I'M AFRAID OUR INVITATION *WON'T* BE IGNORED.
GHAKK--
COME BACK, SPIDER, OR I'LL BE FORCED TO *SNAP* THIS LITTLE LAMB IN HALF!
OKAY, THIS GOES *WELL* BEYOND HAZING THE NEW KID.
I DON'T KNOW *WHAT* YOU'RE UP TO, MEDUSA--
THWIP
--BUT YOU'RE GOING TO NEED SEVEN GALLONS OF PEANUT BUTTER TO GET THIS WEBBING OUT OF YOUR HAIR.
GO, KID-- *GET US OUT OF HERE!*
THWIPP

WHERE?!
JUST NOT HERE!
YOU'RE THE "PRO"--YOU CALL THE GAME PLAN!
I DON'T KNOW!
I DON'T HAVE ONE!
WHOLE LOT OF BIG, CONFUSING STUFF JUST HAPPENED IN A VERY SHORT AMOUNT OF TIME.
OH, MAN--I THINK EVERY AVENGER IN THE WORLD JUST GOT CAPTURED--
NEARLY ALL.
KWONG
OOF--!
GUILTY MAN'S ALWAYS THE FIRST TO RUN--
DROOOOM

--SO TELL ME WHERE YOU TOOK THE RED SKULL OR I'LL SNAP YOUR DAMNED NECK!
LITERALLY THE LEAST *"CAPTAIN AMERICA"* LINE OF DIALOGUE EVER.
THERE'S A LOT MORE DIFFERENT ABOUT ME-- *HMMH?*
KWUNG
OOF!
GUESS THE SHIELD *ALSO* FINDS YOUR BEHAVIOR A *BIT* OUT OF CHARACTER.
KRAKOOM
WILSON, WHAT THE HELL IS TAKING SO LONG, YOU *INCOMPETENT STOOGE?*

MMRPH!
QUIET, CHILD. WE WOULD ALL BE BETTER TO AVOID FIGHTING MY DAUGHTER.
AS STRANGE AS THIS MUST SEEM--
"--I AM HERE TO HELP."
STARK
THE AVENGERS ARE NO LONGER OUR PROBLEM. ALL SAFELY STORED WITHIN PYM'S ANT FARM.
HAVE WE DRAINED WASP OF ALL HER PYM PARTICLES?
BECAUSE WE MIGHT NEED TO ROUND UP THE X-MEN AND--
AND THE INHUMANS? WAS THAT WHAT YOU WERE GOING TO SAY, CAGE?
SO WHAT IF IT WAS?
CEASE THIS INFANTILE DISPLAY.
THIS CHARLATAN ALLOWED SPIDER-MAN AND NOVA TO ESCAPE.
DAMN.
NEITHER OF THEM ARE AWAKENED LIKE US--THEY WILL INTERFERE WITH OUR PLANS!
OUR PLANS? WE HAVE NO COMMON INTERESTS BEYOND THIS POINT.
OUR ALLIANCE HAS SERVED ITS PURPOSE--I HAVE NO FURTHER USE FOR ANY OF YOU.

SHOULD OUR PATHS CROSS AGAIN, I WILL *REND* THE SOULS FROM YOUR BODIES.
STAY *CLEAR* OF ME--
"--FOR I WILL HAVE MY *VENGEANCE.*"
AVENGERS MANSION.
--THEN I WAKE UP TO DISCOVER *CARNAGE* IS PLAYING *HERO!*
BUT IT GETS *WAY* BETTER WHEN I'M CALLED TO AVENGERS TOWER FOR SOME BIG, *FUN* NEWS--
--WHICH TURNS OUT TO BE A RUSE BY A CREW OF *SCOWLING* AVENGERS TO IMPRISON ALL THE *OTHER* AVENGERS!
THEN, AS NOVA AND I TRY TO *POLITELY* SNEAK AWAY--THE ALL-NEW, *ALL-BLOODTHIRSTY CAPTAIN AMERICA* TRIES TO *KILL* US--
BUT, HEY, ALL'S *WELL* BECAUSE *MAGNETO* SHOWS UP TO SAVE US!
AND YOU'LL NEVER GUESS WHO MAGNETO'S WORKING WITH!
GERIATRIC STEVE ROGERS AND HIS NEW PAL--
THIS IS MY SON, IAN, THE NEW NOMAD.
OF COURSE! YOUR *SON.* SURE. WHY NOT? PLEASURE TO MEET YOU.
SO, IS HE GOING TO TRY TO KILL ME AS WELL OR ARE YOU GUYS LIKE THE NEW ASTONISHING AVENGERS, DEDICATED TO *NOT* GOING CRAZY?
IT'S NOT JUST THE AVENGERS.
THE *X-MEN* HAVE GONE MAD AS WELL.

GOOD. *PERFECT.* THE HITS KEEP COMING.
DURING THE BATTLE ON GENOSHA, ROGUE SAW SOMETHING OF CHARLES XAVIER INSIDE THE RED ONSLAUGHT.
DOOM AND SCARLET WITCH CAST ORDER AND CHAOS ENERGY ONTO ONSLAUGHT HOPING TO *INVERT* THE PERSONALITIES, TO BRING XAVIER OUT.
BUT SOMETHING CLEARLY WENT WRONG.
EVERYONE WHO WAS ON THAT ISLAND HAD HIS OR HER BASIC ALIGNMENT *INVERTED.*
THIS JUST GETS BETTER AND BETTER! DOGS AND CATS LIVING TOGETHER--*MASS HYSTERIA!*
SO YOU MEAN EVERY *GOOD* GUY ON THAT ISLAND IS NOW *BAD?*
AND EVERY *BAD* GUY IS NOW...
GOOD.
IT GETS *WORSE.*
EAGER TO HEAR HOW *THAT'S* POSSIBLE.
I PICKED THIS UP JUST BEFORE YOU ARRIVED.

LIVE
THE CHANGE WAS A BIT MORE... *VISIBLE* WITH THE HULK.
THE INVERSION EFFECT RELEASED THE HULK'S HULK.
FIVE MINUTES AGO HE BEGAN A RAMPAGE ACROSS ARIZONA.
CHANNEL 5
HIGHLY OUT OF OUR LEAGUE. BUT WE WILL *FIND* A WAY TO STOP HIM.
WE HAVE TO STOP THE HULK'S HULK?
WHAT'S NEXT, STEVE? FEEDING A CATHETER INTO GALACTUS?
--CHANNEL 5 ON SCENE AS THE MONSTER CONTINUES HIS RAMPAGE, PROPERTY DAMAGE ALONE REACHING INTO THE BILLIONS--
YA FIND THIS INTERESTIN', *LITTLE MAN?*
PISSANTS DRAWN TA THE STENCH OF MY PARTY-TIME FRENZY.
KEEP FILMIN', TENDER BOY--I'M GONNA GIVE YA A *SWEET SHOW* BEFORE I SQUISH YA!
ANYONE WATCHIN' WORTH FIGHTIN'--I START KILLIN' 'TIL *SOMEONE* STOPS ME!
YOU HEAR ME, "HEROES"?-- *I'M CALLIN' YOU OUT!*
YOU WANT A *FIGHT--*

--YOU *GOT* ONE.
HOW DID HE DO THAT?
WHY DID HE DO *THAT?!*
I DON'T KNOW, BUT HE'S ABOUT TO WISH HE *HADN'T.*
QUICK, TO THE QUINJET--WE NEED TO GO HELP HIM BEFORE--
BREETBREETBREETBREETBREETBREETBREETBREE
HEY, IT'S A LOUD ALERT SOUND!
WE *WERE* DUE FOR SOME *BAD NEWS!*
THAT'S A PERIMETER WARNING.
SOMETHING'S *NEARBY.*
BE READY FOR ANYTHING.
EVEN PREPPED, I'M NOT READY FOR WHATEVER *THAT* IS.

THAT IS THE DOOM I FEARED MOST.
APOCALYPSE IS UPON US.
THEY HAVE TURNED INWARD, EATING EACH OTHER LIKE STARVING *RATS*...
...*EXACTLY* AS YOU PREDICTED, HAVOK.
THE AVENGERS HAVE *NEVER* FAILED TO *DISAPPOINT* ME.
IT WASN'T WORTH THE FIGHT ON GENOSHA. BUT *NOW*, WHILE THEY ARE SPLINTERED, IT IS TIME...

"...GET THE RED SKULL."
DEMOCRACY'S *FAILED.*
WE GAVE IT A TRY.
LET THE *IDIOTS* DO EVERYTHING BY *VOTE.*
JUST *LOOK* WHAT IT'S GOTTEN US, WASP.
MURDERERS AND THIEVES RUNNING FREE, CORRUPTION AND INDUSTRY POISONING THE WORLD...IT'S A *MESS* OUT THERE.
BUT THAT'S ALL ABOUT TO COME TO AN END THANKS TO YOUR *GENEROUS* DONATION OF PYM PARTICLES.
NOW I CAN SHRINK DOWN *ANYONE* IN MY WAY.
IT'S THE MOST *HUMANE* SOLUTION-- NO ONE NEED DIE TO BRING ORDER.
THE WORLD NEEDS TO BE DIRECTED BY *ONE VOICE.*
ONE STRONG MAN TO SORT IT ALL OUT--TO GUIDE THE HERD.
THE WORLD *DEMANDS* A TYRANT, JANET.
AND *WHO* BETTER THAN I?
WAS THAT RHETORICAL?

BECAUSE WE *MIGHT* HAVE ANOTHER OPTION IN MIND.
LOOK AT THIS OPULENT TOWER-- SOME *FANCY* DIGS YOU *SWINE* HAVE HERE. FASCISM PAYS, JA?
WE DO APPRECIATE YOU CLEARING OUT THE OTHER AVENGERS, SUGAH-- MAKES THE DOMINATION BY THE X-MEN SO MUCH EASIER.
IF YOU WISH TO *SURVIVE*-- DELIVER THE RED SKULL TO US *NOW*.
WAIT, WHAT THE HELL--?!
JANET...?!
YOU DARE TOUCH MY WIFE?!
ZHOOOOOOM
NIGHTCRAWLER, COLLECT THE SKULL.
SKULL'S LOCKED UP TIGHT!
BAMF
SO UNLESS YOU *GENE FREAKS* WANT ME TO *DETONATE* HIS CELL, YOU'LL--
NO RED SKULL.
BAMF
SO WE CAN MOVE TO THE NEXT ITEM ON TODAY'S AGENDA:
KILLING THE REST OF YOU.
YERAGH--!
SHLK

ZA-TOOOM
NICE TRY, WEATHER WITCH!
OOPS, HIT THE WRONG GAL, SWEETNESS.
GHA--!
KWANNGG
I CAN TAKE YOUR MIND OFF OF THAT BROKEN HAND.
OOF--!
PWOK
KREEECHH
YOU'VE HELD THE STATUS QUO TOGETHER FOR A GOOD RUN.
BUT ALL EMPIRES FALL.

TODAY ENDS THE ERA OF HUMAN DOMINATION.
SKROOOOOM
ENOUGH.
I NEED HIM ALIVE.
KURT WAS RIGHT.
RED SKULL'S GONE. EITHER THEY MOVED HIM OR--
HE WILL RESURFACE.
AND WHEN HE DOES, HE WILL SIDE WITH US.
CAPTAIN, YOU WILL DELIVER A MESSAGE TO YOUR FLOCK.
GAKK--
TELL THE HUMAN FILTH THEY HAVE THREE HOURS TO VACATE MY ISLAND.
MANHATTAN IS THE FIRST PRIZE OF THE MUTANT UPRISING.
WHY...?

BECAUSE IT'S IMPORTANT TO YOU.
KWOKK
AND WE ARE GOING TO TAKE AWAY *EVERYTHING* YOU *EVER* CARED ABOUT.
THAPP
THE *RIGHTFUL* HEIRS OF THIS WORLD HAVE COME FOR WHAT IS OWED. NEW YORK IS *OURS.*
ANY HUMAN FOUND HERE IN THREE HOURS WILL BE *SLAUGHTERED.*
TELL THEM, GOOD CAPTAIN.
TELL THEM ALL--
--THE APOCALYPSE IS UPON YOU.

6
VII • MMXIV

AWAKENED LIKE US

INVERSION: CHAPTER 3

HUMANS OF EARTH--I AM APOCALYPSE.
HEED MY WORDS, FOR THIS IS YOUR LAST WARNING.
IN THE PAST WEEK WE HAVE EJECTED COUNTLESS ARMED FORCES ATTEMPTING TO RECLAIM THE NEW MUTANT CAPITAL, MANHATTAN.
THERE HAVE BEEN NO CASUALTIES UP UNTIL THIS POINT, BUT AS OF TODAY THAT ENDS.
WE WILL NO LONGER EXPEL YOUR ARMIES--MY X-MEN WILL SLAUGHTER THEM OUTRIGHT.
MANHATTAN IS OURS--BE GRATEFUL IT IS ALL WE'VE TAKEN.
WHAT WE TAKE, HOW SOON WE TAKE IT, HOW MANY LIVES ARE LOST--
THIS DEPENDS ON HOW WELL YOU LISTEN.
THE MUTANT NATION IS BORN.
NO LONGER WILLING TO STAND BY AS YOU DICTATE OUR FATE TO US.
WE WILL NO LONGER GENUFLECT, PATIENTLY HOPING FOR PEACEFUL COHABITATION WITH YOU SAVAGE MONGRELS.
WE ARE SIMPLY TAKING OUR PIECE.
THE QUESTION ISN'T IF WE WILL WIN THIS WAR--THE QUESTION BEFORE YOU, AFTER SUCH GRAVE MISTREATMENT OF MUTANTKIND--

"--IS CAN YOU PERSUADE *US* TO LEAVE ANY OF *YOU* ALIVE?"
HOW WAS THE BROADCAST RECEIVED, HAVOK?
NUMEROUS ATTEMPTS AT NEGOTIATIONS FROM THE PRESIDENT, OTHER WORLD LEADERS.
LET THEM SOAK IN TERROR.
WITH NO AVENGERS, THEY WON'T RISK A FURTHER ESCALATION-- NOT SOON.
BY THE TIME THEY FIND THEIR NERVE--
--IT WILL BE TOO LATE.
THE GENE BOMB?
WILL BE COMPLETED IN A MATTER OF HOURS.
CENTURIES THE AKKABA DREAMED OF SUCH A THING, CYCLOPS. WORKING TOGETHER, WE COMPLETED IT IN A MATTER OF DAYS.
LORD APOCALYPSE--
--THERE'S A MATTER THAT DEMANDS YOUR ATTENTION.
A LONE INTRUDER.
WHO WOULD BE SO *STUPID?*

MYSTIQUE. SHE MUST HAVE SNUCK PAST OUR PERIMETER GUARDS.
SHE'S OUT FRONT, DEMANDING COUNSEL.
THEN SHE WILL HAVE IT...
"...I KNOW PRECISELY THE AMBASSADORS TO SEND."
X-MEN--THE ROAD YOU WALK WILL LEAD ONLY TO RUIN!
A WAR THAT WILL BURN THE WORLD DOWN!
PLEASE HEAR ME!
BAMF
WE'VE HEARD QUITE ENOUGH FROM YOU.
KURT'S RIGHT, "MOM."
WHY DO YOU WISH TO STOP US?
WE'VE ACCOMPLISHED ALL YOU DREAMED OF--THAT WHICH YOU WERE INCAPABLE OF.
I DID NOT COME HERE FOR A FIGHT, CHILDREN.
I CAME ONLY TO TALK.
YA HEAR THAT, KURT? SHE WANTS TO TALK.
CAN'T BE THE SAME WOMAN WHO RAISED YOU TO JOIN THE BROTHERHOOD OF EVIL MUTANTS AND ABANDONED ME TO DEATH, ROGUE.

YOU KNOW WHAT I SAY IS RIGHT.
JOINING APOCALYPSE, TAKING MANHATTAN, WAGING THIS WAR--YOU WILL UNDO THE PEACE CHARLES XAVIER FOUGHT FOR IN ONE SWIFT STROKE.
YOU MISUNDERSTAND US, "MOTHER."
SHKK
AGHH--!
WE'VE GIVEN UP ON PEACE.
JUST LIKE YOU ALWAYS TAUGHT.
GAKK
GONNA BE A HOOT!
WE'RE GONNA DEAL WITH THE HUMANS--
--SAME WAY THEY DEALT WITH US.
NO--!

NO ROOM FOR *PEACENIKS* IN OUR CLUB.
OOF--!
IT'S OKAY.
THEY'VE GONE *MAD*, CREED--
YOU DON'T KNOW THE HALF OF IT.
GROOOOM!

WOOOSH
BAMF
SAD TO SEE YOU GO DARK, NIGHTCRAWLER.
OOF--!
YOU WERE THE ONE PERSON ON EARTH WHO GAVE LOGAN HOPE IN MANKIND.
BAMF
AND YOU THE ONE WHO MOST TOOK IT *AWAY*, SABRETOOTH.
GONE.
THE OLD MORLOCK TUNNELS.
IT'S ALMOST IRONIC...

"...HE'S USING THE MORLOCK TUNNELS TO HIDE FROM US."
NO, NO, I'M NOT TAKING PUBLIC OFFERING, YOU DELIGHTFUL GIRL.
SAN FRANCISCO. THE NEW HEADQUARTERS OF STARK INDUSTRIES.
THE PEOPLE OF SAN FRANCISCO HAVE VOTED--THE EXTREMIS APP IS A HIT. IT'S GOING TO BE WORTH MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE, WELL, EVER!
I LOVE IT, MR. STARK. I'VE NEVER LOOKED BETTER.
I SET MY PAYMENTS TO AUTOMATIC.
WORTH EVERY PENNY.
SEE, I'M A SMART DEALER--FIRST TASTE FOR FREE.
PUBLIC'S HOOKED--NOW THE REAL MONEY-- IN APP PURCHASES.
UH-HUH.
OH, LOOK-- I'M BORING YOU.
AND YOUR IDIOT SHIRT IS KILLING MY BUZZ-- SO OFF YOU GO.
GOT SOME BAD NEWS, STARK--

--I'M SHUTTING THIS DOWN.
SPEAKING OF *BUZZKILL!*
MATT!
OR *NOT* MATT, OR DAREDEVIL, OR *WHATEVER* YOU WANT TO GO BY--OPEN-MINDED KIND OF PARTY.
JOIN IN, SOURPUSS. EXTREMIS IS ON THE HOUSE.
TAKE CARE OF THAT WHOLE *GINGER* THING YOU WERE CURSED WITH.
YOU'RE DRINKING AGAIN.
WHY *TWELVE* STEPS WHEN THIS *ONE* STEP IS SO MUCH EASIER?
SO MUCH MORE--
WHAK
--FUN.
KRESH
YOU WANT TO FALL OFF THE WAGON, TONY?
THAT'S YOUR CHOICE.
I'VE SPENT THE LAST WEEK FIGHTING A CRIME WAVE OF *YOUR* MAKING.
YOUR PRODUCT!
PEOPLE DOING *ANYTHING* THEY HAVE TO FOR IT!
YEAH.

SORRY, KARL MARX, BUT THAT'S HOW CAPITALISM WORKS.
GREAT PRODUCTS BECOME SO POPULAR THAT THE LOWER CLASSES RESORT TO CRIME TO PAY FOR THEM.
HOW IS THAT ANY DIFFERENT FROM A NICE CAR OR A PLASMA TELEVISION SCREEN--?
YOU KNOW DAMNED WELL WHY IT'S DIFFERENT!
I WAS ENJOYING THIS PARTY BETTER BEFORE YOU SHOWED, MATTHEW.
I'M GOING TO HAVE TO INVITE YOU TO LEAVE.
GAZAK
A MAN WHO PREFERS ARGUING TO DRINKS AND WOMEN--
MOST LAWYERS LIKE ALL THREE.

YOU'VE LOST YOUR MIND.
KRA-ZAK
NO. I'VE FINALLY FOUND IT.
FAST, RIGHT?
IT'S NOT *JUST* THE ARMOR YOU HAVE TO WATCH OUT FOR THESE DAYS, MATTHEW.
OOF--!
I GET THAT YOU'RE UPSET, BUDDY. I WON'T HOLD THIS LITTLE OUTBURST AGAINST YOU.
YOU KNOW YOU'RE *ALWAYS* WELCOME, BUT IF YOU *DO* COME BACK...
...COAT CHECK THE ATTITUDE.

LATVERIA.
I HAVE DONE MY UTMOST TO GUIDE LATVERIA TO A *BRIGHTER* TOMORROW.
A LIE I HAVE TOLD MYSELF MY ENTIRE LIFE.
I HAVE *USED* THIS NATION.
EXPLOITED HER RESOURCES FOR *MY* PURPOSES.
IMPERILED HER. YOU ALL.
THAT IS *CHANGING.*
THE BURDEN OF A GREAT BLEAKNESS IN MY SOUL IS *GONE.*
AND THE EGOTISM THAT DROVE ME WITH IT.
I AM NOT ABOVE YOU.
I AM FLAWED AND IMPERFECT, AND UNDER THE EYES OF GOD-- MERELY A MAN.
I AM DONE HIDING.
LOOK UPON MY *TRUE FACE* AND SEE IN IT YOUR BROTHER.
>GASP<
>GASP<
>GASP<
LATVERIA HENCEFORTH IS A *DEMOCRACY.*
IF LATVERIA IS WHAT YOU LOVE MOST--

--YOU WILL LIVE TO SEE IT *BURN.*
SHRA-BOOOOM
YOU *USED* ME.
MANIPULATED MY POWERS.
TURNED THE WORLD AGAINST ME!
I SEEK REDEMPTION, WITCH--*BUT I WILL NOT BE LYING DOWN!*
ZAKOOOM
REDEMPTION?
SO IT IS *PENANCE* YOU SEEK? TO PAY FOR YOUR CRIMES?
IF THAT IS YOUR WISH...
...I CAN BE ACCOMMODATING.
WOULD YOU IMPERIL YOURSELF TO SAVE YOUR DENIZENS, DOOM?
DON'T--!

YEARS OF MY LIFE HUNTED AND DESPISED BY THE MUTANTS!
YEARS IN HIDING-- BLAMED FOR THEIR DECLINE.
GHAGH--!
YOU WILL *REGRET* USING ME AS YOUR PROXY!
YERAGH--!
KRADOOOM
YOU WILL BE DEAD, BUT YOUR *SOUL* WILL REMAIN IMPRISONED FOR ETERNITY.
ETERNITY WATCHING--
--AS MY *RAGE* COVERS THIS WORLD IN A *BLACK PLAGUE!*
ZEROOOSH
HE'S GONE?! WHO DARES INTERFERE?!

OKAY, I DID IT.
I'M NOT ENTIRELY SURE *WHY* I DID IT, BUT I DID IT.
WE CAN'T ALLOW YOUR SISTER TO KILL DOOM, PIETRO. SHE'D NEVER RECOVER FROM IT.
WHERE IS WANDA?
THE LAND OF FURIOUS SUPER EVIL.
WHATEVER'S POSSESSED HER, IT'S NO GOOD AND IT'S DOWN DEEP.
DEEPER THAN YOU KNOW.
AKK
UGH!
YOU HAVE MADE THE LAST MISTAKE OF YOUR LIVES IN STANDING WITH THIS FILTH.
BUT WHAT ELSE COULD I EXPECT FROM MY *"FAMILY"*?

LAS VEGAS.
SNAKE EYES, LUCKY SNAKE EYES!
THE SHIRTLESS GENTLEMAN WINS AGAIN!
HMMH
I'VE SEEN THIS GAME BEFORE, BROTHER...
...I THINK THEY'RE LETTING YOU WIN.
AND I THINK IT MIGHT HAVE SOMETHING TO DO WITH THAT MASSIVE AXE RESTING ON THE TABLE.
BEGONE, LOKI.
YOU'VE DONE FAIRLY WELL FOR YOURSELF.
WHERE DID YOU GET THE MONEY FOR SUCH A LARGE WAGER, DEAR BROTHER?

AGAIN, I'M NOT SURE THAT'S *QUITE* HOW A CASINO WORKS.
IT'S HOW *THIS* ONE WORKS.
MJOLNIR COULD HELP CLEAR WHATEVER EVIL FOGS YOUR MIND.
I LEFT THAT *CURSED* RELIC ON THE MOON.
I AM *UNWORTHY*-- GLADLY SO.
YOU'VE HAD TOO MUCH TO DRINK.
COME WITH ME BEFORE YOU COMPLETELY TARNISH WHAT IS LEFT OF YOUR REPUTA--
DARE NOT TOUCH ME.
PWAKK

WHY DO YOU PESTER ME, LITTLE SHADOW?
WHY DO YOU CONTINUE TO NIP AT MY ANKLE?
I'M CURRENTLY *INCAPABLE* OF LYING, SO AS MUCH AS IT PAINS ME, THOR, I'M GOING TO TELL THE *TRUTH--*
I'M TRYING TO HELP YOU...
...BECAUSE I LOVE YOU.
YOU'VE ALWAYS BEEN THERE TO TRY AND TURN ME TOWARDS THE LIGHT.
NOW IT IS MY TURN TO RETURN THE FAVOR.
KRAKK
YOUR LOVE IS MISPLACED.
TWOOOM

I FEEL ONLY DISGUST FOR YOU, LOKI.
KROKK
I...I WON'T FIGHT YOU...
LOOK INTO YOUR HEART, BROTHER...
A TERRIBLE PLAGUE IS UPON YOU.
YOU ARE THE ONLY AFFLICTION THAT HAUNTS ME!
THWIPP
YOU BOYS NEED A TIME-OUT.
CONSIDER THIS A FREE INTERVENTION FROM YOUR FRIENDLY NEIGHBORHOOD SPIDER-MAN!
WE'RE NOT DONE.
BAH.

AVENGERS MANSION.
WE HAVE TO DO *SOMETHING!*
THEY'VE *ALL* GONE EXTREMELY CRAZY!
I'VE GONE EXTREMELY CRAZY.
I JUST TOLD MY BROTHER I *LOVE* HIM...
I SHUDDER TO THINK ABOUT THE REPERCUSSIONS OF *THAT* MANEUVER.
WILL ONE OF YOU *PLEASE* TELL ME WHAT IS GOING ON?!
THE AVENGERS HAVE ALL GONE LOCO, THE X-MEN HAVE TAKEN OVER NEW YORK, AND EVERY OTHER HERO ON EARTH HAS BEEN SHRUNKEN TO SUBATOMIC SIZE AND IMPRISONED.
SO, YOU KNOW, *TUESDAY.*
SO, WE'RE *IT?* WE'VE GOT NO ONE LEFT TO HELP US STOP THE X-MEN *AND* THE AVENGERS?
THAT'S NOT ENTIRELY TRUE, LOKI. THERE WERE OTHERS ON GENOSHA--THE ONES *YOU* ARRIVED WITH--
THE INVERSION HIT THEM AS WELL.
ARE YOU SUGGESTING WE BRING TOGETHER ALL OF THE VILLAINS WHO WERE ON GENOSHA TO FORM A NEW AVENGERS?
NO...

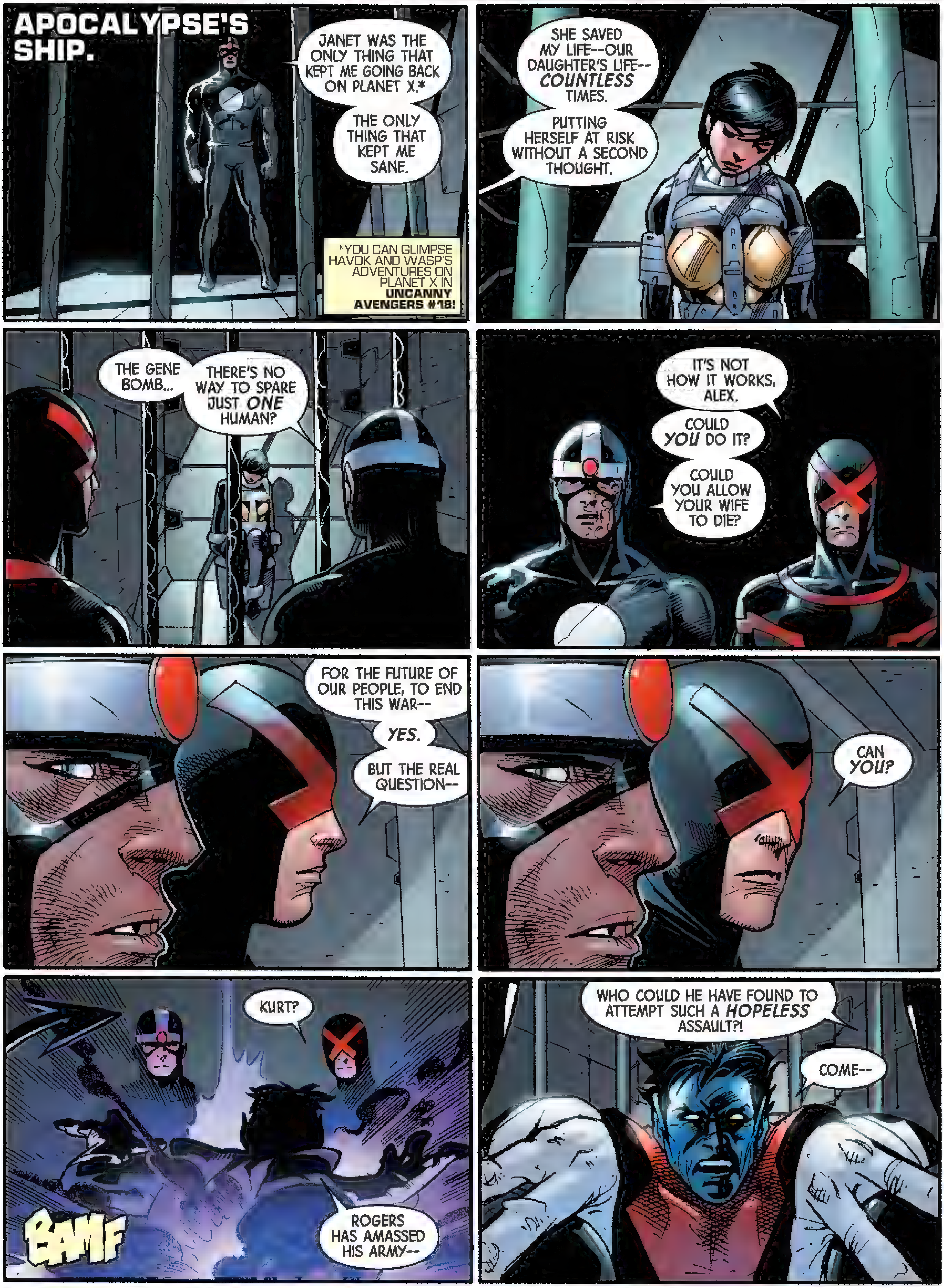
I'M SAYING I *ALREADY* DID.

THIS... THIS SEEMS... UNWISE.
IN TIMES OF GREAT TURMOIL, SOMETIMES THE ONLY STRATEGY LEFT IS THE ONE WE LIKE LEAST.
I'M A GOOD 'UN NOW, SON.
Y'ALL CAN COUNT ON IT.
WELL, COMBINED WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO TAKE DOWN MY DRUNKEN BROTHER...
THOR AIN'T THE PRIORITY, TRICKSTER.
APOCALYPSE AND THE X-MEN HAVE GONE TOTALLY OFF THE RESERVATION.
I INFILTRATED THAT DAMN TOWER AN' WHAT I SAW... NO GOOD.
X-FOLKS'RE LOOKING TO END THE WAR PERMANENT.
GOT A D.N.A. BOMB'LL FLASH-FRY EVERYONE WHO AIN'T GOT AN X-GENE.
WE'RE THE ONLY ONES WHO KNOW ABOUT IT.
AN' WE GOT AN HOUR TO STOP 'EM.

7
AXIS

END THE LINE

NEW WORLD DISORDER: CHAPTER 1


APOCALYPSE'S SHIP.
JANET WAS THE ONLY THING THAT KEPT ME GOING BACK ON PLANET X.*
THE ONLY THING THAT KEPT ME SANE.
*YOU CAN GLIMPSE HAVOK AND WASP'S ADVENTURES ON PLANET X IN UNCANNY AVENGERS #18!
SHE SAVED MY LIFE--OUR DAUGHTER'S LIFE--*COUNTLESS* TIMES.
PUTTING HERSELF AT RISK WITHOUT A SECOND THOUGHT.
THE GENE BOMB...
THERE'S NO WAY TO SPARE JUST *ONE* HUMAN?
IT'S NOT HOW IT WORKS, ALEX.
COULD *YOU* DO IT?
COULD YOU ALLOW YOUR WIFE TO DIE?
FOR THE FUTURE OF OUR PEOPLE, TO END THIS WAR--
YES.
BUT THE REAL QUESTION--
CAN *YOU?*
KURT?
BAMF
ROGERS HAS AMASSED HIS ARMY--
WHO COULD HE HAVE FOUND TO ATTEMPT SUCH A *HOPELESS* ASSAULT?!
COME--

"--YOU'LL HAVE TO SEE IT WITH YOUR OWN EYES."
ALL RIGHT, YA NUGS-- AVENGERS ASSEMBLE!
X-MEN-- COME OUT AND PL-AY!
MAN, THAT IS ONE TIRED REFERENCE, KASADY.
"THE GREEN PARK WHERE ONCE WE DANCED HAS GROWN THORNS AND DEAD BRUSH OF BUMMER FREQUENCIES.
"OUR HARMONY NOW BLANKETED IN THE DISTORTION OF *BAD VIBES.*
"TWO ARMIES MEET ON THE ROAD TO NOWHERESVILLE.
"HUNKS AND FOXY MAMAS ALL WILLING TO LAY DOWN WHAT THE GOOD UNIVERSE GAVE 'EM--
"--LOCKED IN A DOMINATION GROOVE.
WAS HOPIN' TO HAVE ONE MORE CHANCE TO CRUSH HUMAN SKULLS WITH MY HANDS!
BUT Y'ALL CALLIN' YOURSELVES AVENGERS NOW--THAT MAKES IT *SO MUCH* SWEETER.
FWOOOSH
TWOOM
KLANG
"X-FOLKS GONE SOLID CRAZY, MAN.
"INCAPABLE OF SEEING THE NEEDS OF *OTHERS* AS EQUAL TO THEIR *OWN.*
"THEY'VE TURNED THEIR BACKS ON NATURE'S TRUE SOLUTION.
"FREE LOVE--
THEIR LIVES SPENT IN A VAIN ATTEMPT TO COHABITATE WITH THE HUMANS.
"--A DRUM CIRCLE--"
LIVES SPENT AFRAID, LIVES SPENT HIDING.

TODAY IT ENDS.
--BUT OUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS WOULD RATHER FIGHT IT OUT THAN HUG IT UP.
OKAY--YOU HAVE TO SHUT UP NOW, DEADPOOL.
I DON'T THINK HE'S LEAVING.
NO, I THINK THIS MORE FALLS UNDER "ACTIVATING A BOMB," MY GROOVY SIDEKICK.
I'M NOT YOUR...UGH, IT DOESN'T MATTER.
THIS IS A PROBLEM, WADE-- THE POINT OF THE DIVERSION WAS TO GET HIM TO GO OUTSIDE...
THERE IS NO WAY WE CAN TAKE DOWN APOCALYPSE.
AW, SURE THERE IS, NEGATIVE NANCY.
WE JUST NEED TO TEACH HIM TO STRIVE FOR LESS "AGE OF APOCALYPSE"--
--AND MORE "AGE OF AQUARIUS."
THWOKK

IDIOT.
THE WISE SCHOLAR PETER MARSHALL ONCE ASKED: IF YOU'RE GOING TO MAKE A PARACHUTE JUMP, YOU SHOULD BE AT LEAST HOW HIGH?
THREE DAYS OF STEADY DRINKING SHOULD DO IT.
BY THE GREAT PETER MARSHALL'S LOGIC, YOU JUST NEED A DRINK TO UNWIND, SWEET SPIRIT!
ZAAAAAK
LET'S HOP IN MY V.W. VAN, TREK ON UP TO SEDONA, BUY SOME AURA CRYSTALS--
BOOOOOM
GOTTA GET YOUR CHAKRA IN LINE, TURKEY!
WE'LL GET A FULL BODY RUBDOWN, SOAK UP THE HOT SPRINGS, HIT THE *MUD BATHS*--
--GET IN TOUCH WITH OURSELVES.
ZRAKK
I AM IN TOUCH WITH *MYSELF*, FOOL--
--AND NOW I AM IN TOUCH WITH *YOU*.
KROKK
KROOOM

SO, RAIN-CHECK THE MUD BATH?
SEDONA'S A *DE-LIGHT* THIS TIME OF YEAR. YOU COULD MEET MY FRIEND, CREEPY *CARL: MOON DRUMMER.*
HE'LL GET YOU IN A BEAT CIRCLE AT A LEVEL YOU'RE COMFORTABLE WITH--
C'MON...C'MON... WHAT LANGUAGE IS THIS BOMB'S CODE WRITTEN IN?
HISTORIANS WILL SEE WHAT WE HAVE DONE THIS DAY AS AN *UNAVOIDABLE* STRIKE TO DEFEND THE *EVOLUTION* OF MANKIND.
GRAZZAK
THEY WILL REMEMBER THE X-MEN AS THE HEROES WHO ENDED THE WAR AND *PRESERVED* THE EVOLUTION OF--
YIP-YAP-BLAH-BLAH-BLAH!
YOU GOTTA QUIT RATIONALIZING THE *NEGATIVITY,* SWEET FRANCIS LONGCORN!
WE GET IT--*EVERYONE* GETS IT--APOCALYPSE *LIKEY* EVOLUTION.
POINT *WELL* MADE.
NOW GIDDY UP, LI'L DARWIN! GOTTA RUN OFF SOME OF THAT *BAD ENERGY!*
LOOKOUT, SIDEKICK--! THIS GUY'S UNCONSTRUCTIVENESS IS *OUT-OF-CONTROL!*
OH, SON OF A--

TKOOOOM
YOU CANNOT FIGHT EVOLUTION.
WELL, SCIENTIFICALLY SPEAKING, THAT'S NOT *ENTIRELY* TRUE.
AND NOT *ALL* EVOLUTION IS AN IMPROVEMENT, 'POCCY.
THE ASSUMPTION THAT BY BEING *MUTATED* YOU'RE NATURALLY *SUPERIOR*--
--IS A TAD ARROGANT.
THWONK
AND WADE?
YES?
I'M *NOT* YOUR SIDEKICK.
THAT'S YOUR EGO TALKIN', MAN.
GOTTA GET *THAT* MONSTER UNDER CONTROL.

JA, YOU SHOULD BE MORE RESPECTFUL TO YOUR IDIOT COLLEAGUES--
BAMF
KWUDD
A MATTER OF PROFESSIONAL COURTESY.
BAMF
BUT I SUPPOSE THIS LESSON IS WASTED ON YOUR KIND.
NAH, MAN, WE GET IT.
KRAKK
--AN' OL' PAPA CARNAGE'S GOT NOTHIN' BUT RESPECT FOR HIS FELLOW WEB-SLINGER!
CAN'T...QUITE...MAKE MOUTH SAY, "THANK YOU, CARNAGE."
NO THANKS NECESSARY, BROTHER!
BEING MAGNANIMOUS... CONFUSING ME MORE...

LOGAN WAS *RIGHT* ABOUT YOU, CYCLOPS.
SEEMS NO MATTER *WHAT'S* GOIN' ON, ALWAYS A SUMMERS BROTHER *MESSIN'* UP THE WORKS FOR THE REST OF US.
A FRIGHTENED LITTLE BRANCH--
--BENDIN' WHICHEVER WAY THE WIND BLOWS!
YOU THINK YOU *KNOW US,* CREED? KNOW WHAT WE'RE TRULY CAPABLE OF?
EVERY TIME YOU'VE *EVER* FACED THE X-MEN, WE'VE SHOWN *MERCY.*
BUT THAT'S *OVER*--
YERAGH--!
THROOOOOM
WE'RE *DONE* HOLDING BACK.

KRADWOOOOM
C'MON, CHUMMLY. NO DYIN'--
"...THIS FIGHT AIN'T OVER YET."
C'MON, PEOPLE NOW!
SMILE ON YOUR BROTHERS!
EVERYBODY GET TOGETHER, TRY AND LOVE ONE ANOTHER...
...RIGHT NOW.
LOVE IS A LIE.
KROOOM
A TOOL USED TO CONTROL THE WEAK...

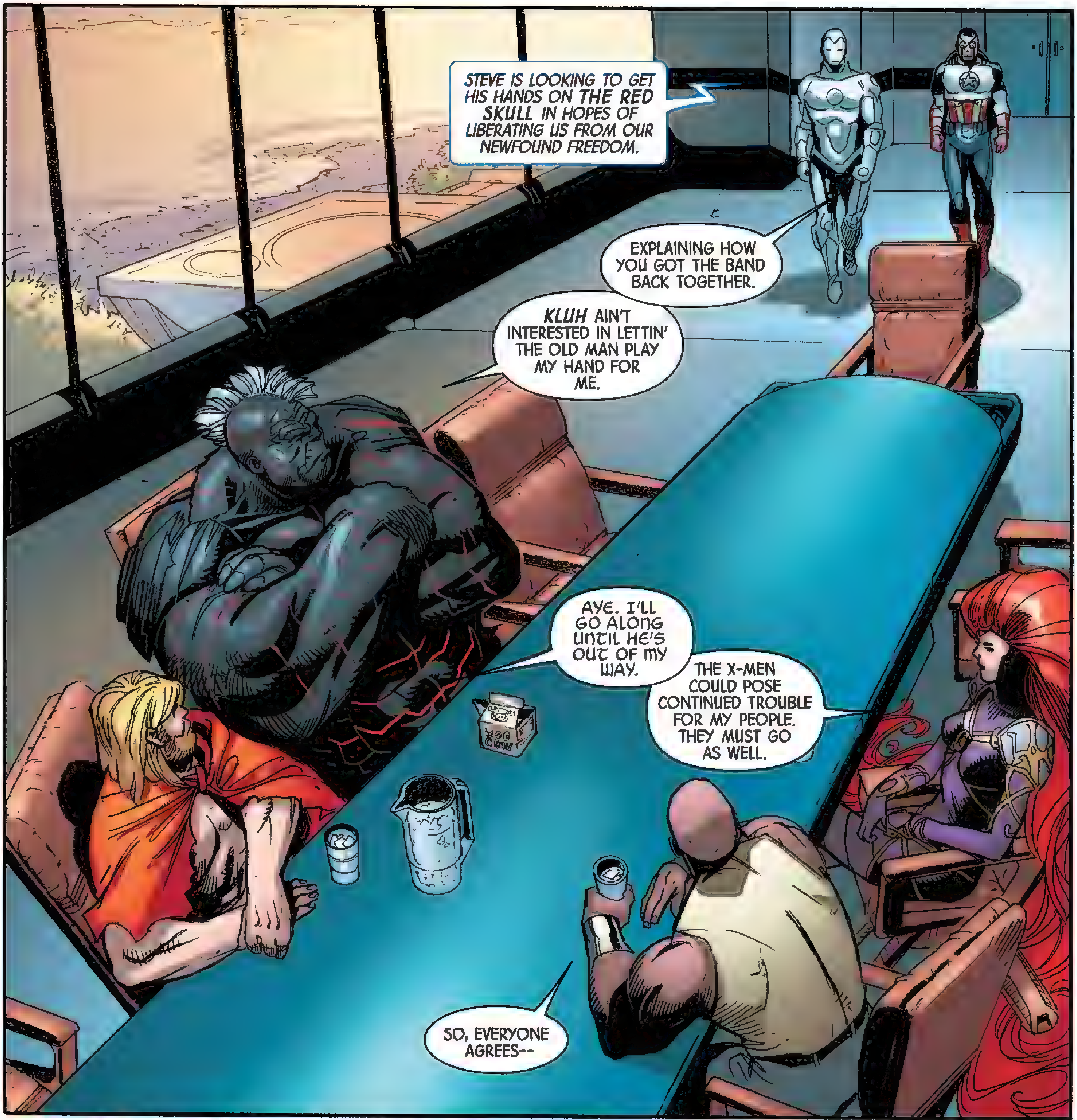
"...HATE IS THE TRUTH OF THE WORLD."
LATVERIA.
WHY AM I NOT SURPRISED?
EVEN AFTER WHAT THIS MONSTER DID TO ME, YOU-- MY OWN FAMILY--
--SIDE WITH DOOM!
SO YOU WILL SUFFER HIS FATE WITH HIM.
WANDA--LISTEN TO ME! YOU'RE NOT THINKING STRAIGHT!
I CANNOT UNDO MY PAST, WITCH.
BUT I WILL NOT ALLOW MY NATION TO PAY FOR MY SINS!
UNH--!
GO, PIETRO!
CREATE A VORTEX--DEPRIVE HER OF OXYGEN.
KNOCKING HER OUT IS OUR ONLY HOPE.
YOUR ONLY HOPE WAS TO STAY OUT OF MY WAY, "FATHER"!

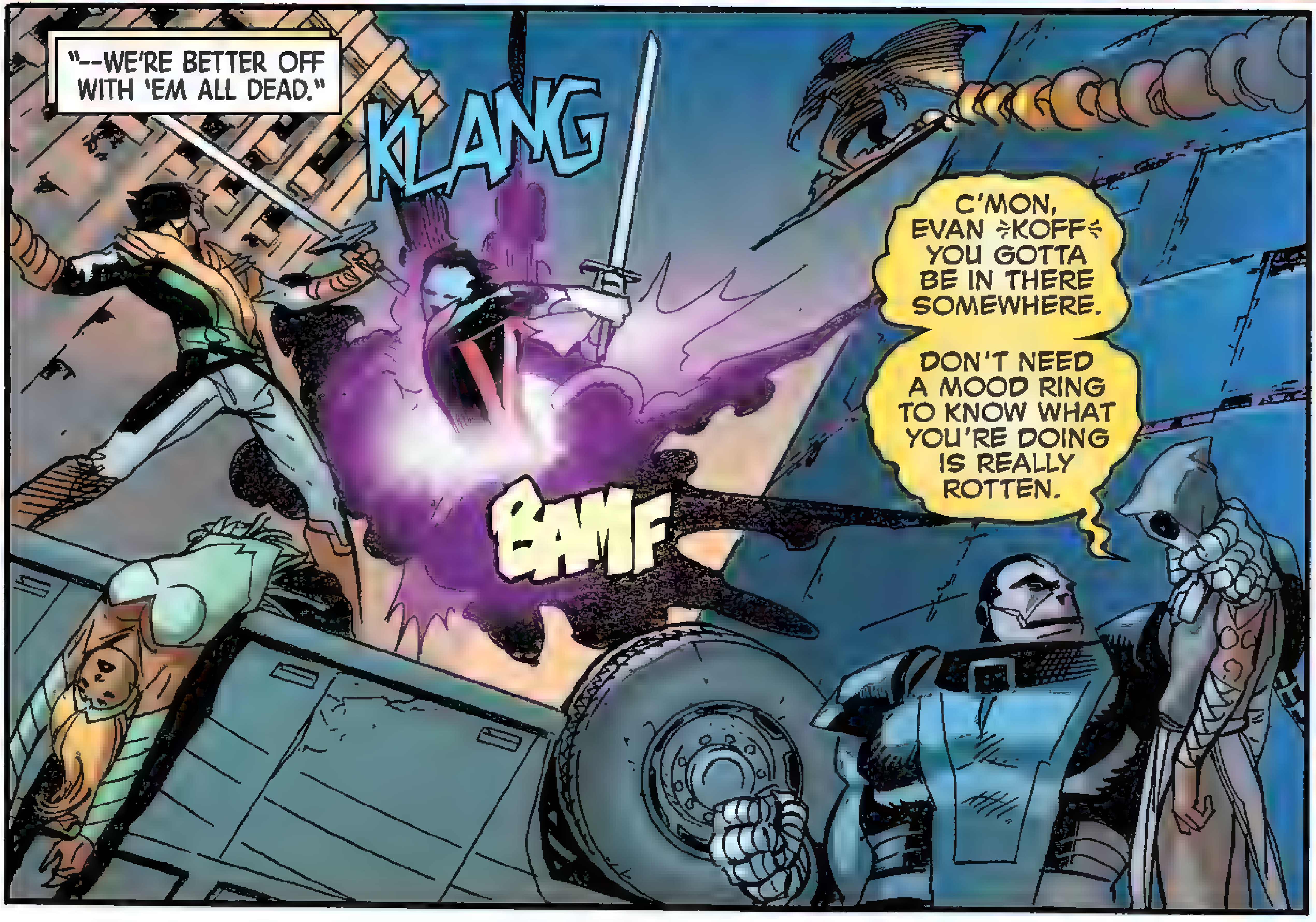
INSTEAD YOU HAVE CHOSEN TRAGEDY! CHOSEN TO SIDE WITH THIS TRASH WHO SO ABUSED YOUR OWN DAUGHTER!
YOU HAVE CHOSEN TO INCUR THE VENGEANCE OF THE QUEEN OF CHAOS!
THIS ISN'T THE ONLY WAY, WANDA. I WILL NEVER LEAVE YOUR SIDE, NEVER STOP FIGHTING FOR YOU--
YOU'VE SHOWN TODAY WHOSE SIDE YOU'RE ON, DEAR BROTHER.
ALLOW ME TO REPAY YOU WITH A CHAOS CURSE ON MY BLOODLINE!
HEAR ME NOW, LORDS OF CHAOS!
FIND PERCH WITHIN THE BLOOD OF MY BLOOD!
CRUSH THEIR BONES!
BOIL THEIR BLOOD DRY IN THEIR VEINS!
RUPTURE THEIR SOULS!
END THE LINE--!

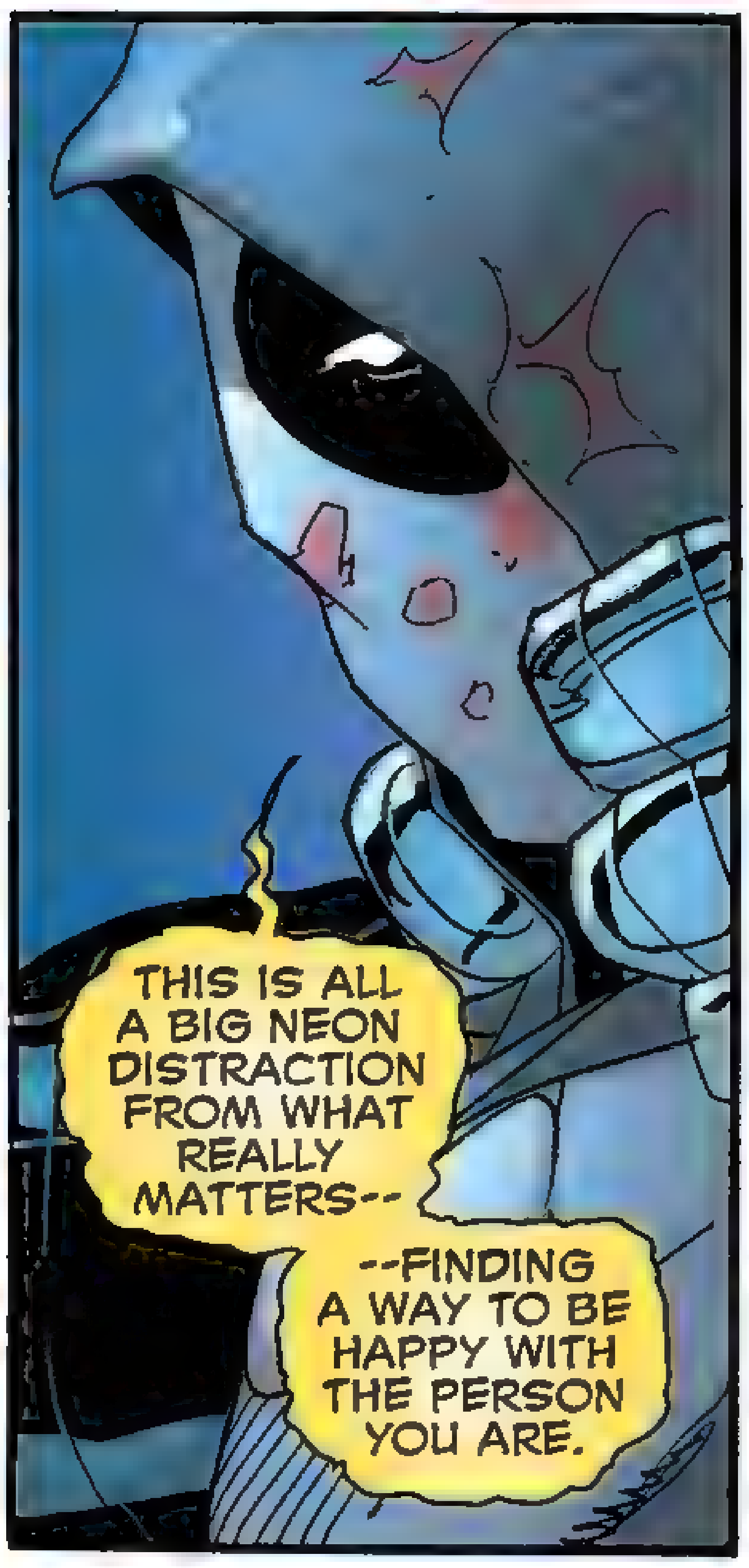
STRIKE MY FAMILY DOWN!
YERAGHH--!
PIETRO--!
YOU STILL STAND?! WHAT TRICKERY IS THIS--?! YOU--YOU SHOULD BE RUINED!
BY THE DARK GODS--
--IT'S A LIE!
YOUR LIFE, ALL OF THIS-- A LIE!
YOU WERE USED!
THE GREAT MAGNETO, A PAWN IN SOMEONE'S GAME.
YOU HAVE NO FAMILY, MAGNUS. YOU ARE TRULY ALONE.
NO...
WHAT SWEET IRONY.
YOU CAN'T KNOW HOW LIBERATING IT IS TO KNOW THERE IS NO BLOOD CONNECTION BETWEEN US.

AND WHAT OF PIETRO?!
HE IS YOUR BROTHER--LOOK WHAT YOU'VE DONE TO HIM.
NO.
YOU PULLED HIM INTO *THIS.*
PULLED HIM INTO YOUR BROTHERHOOD OF EVIL. SOUGHT TO SEND HIM DOWN YOUR SAME PATH OF RUIN.
YOU SENT HIM OUT TO BETRAY *ME!*
TO MANIPULATE MY FEELINGS!
ALL YOU'VE *EVER* DONE IS BRING SUFFERING TO HIS LIFE!
SUFFERING I WILL NOW REPAY, LOW DEMON!
WOOOSH
GHRAGAGH--!
WHAT IS THIS? LEAVING YOUR NEW FRIENDS SO SOON, COWARD?!
THERE IS *NOWHERE* YOU CAN HIDE!
NOT AFTER WHAT YOU'VE DONE TO MY FAMILY!

WHO HAS DONE WHAT TO YOUR "FAMILY," WITCH?
RUN, VON DOOM! RUN FROM YOUR PAST! RUN FROM YOUR SINS! AND WHILE YOU HIDE--
"--LATVERIA WILL BURN!"
OKAY, STARK. WHAT'S SO DAMNED IMPORTANT I HAD TO COME ALL THE WAY TO SAN FRANCISCO?
I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN SOME REVENGE AGAINST THE X-TYPES WHO TROUNCED YOU.
REVENGE IS LIKE CHICKEN SOUP FOR THE SOUL.
AND, MORE IMPORTANTLY, SELF-PRESERVATION.
YOU'VE BEEN WATCHING THE SCENE IN MANHATTAN?
STAYING THE HELL CLEAR OF IT.
GETTING INVOLVED ISN'T IN MY BEST INTERESTS.
AND NOW THESE VILLAINS SUDDENLY JOINING IN--
--WHOLE THING STINKS OF OUR OL' PAL STEVE ROGERS.
AND IF I'M STEVE ROGERS, I'M LOOKING FOR THE ONE MAN WHO CAN UNDO ALL OF THIS.


STEVE IS LOOKING TO GET HIS HANDS ON THE RED SKULL IN HOPES OF LIBERATING US FROM OUR NEWFOUND FREEDOM.
EXPLAINING HOW YOU GOT THE BAND BACK TOGETHER.
KLUH AIN'T INTERESTED IN LETTIN' THE OLD MAN PLAY MY HAND FOR ME.
AYE. I'LL GO ALONG UNTIL HE'S OUT OF MY WAY.
MOO COW
THE X-MEN COULD POSE CONTINUED TROUBLE FOR MY PEOPLE. THEY MUST GO AS WELL.
SO, EVERYONE AGREES--


"--WE'RE BETTER OFF WITH 'EM ALL DEAD."
KLANG
C'MON, EVAN *KOFF* YOU GOTTA BE IN THERE SOMEWHERE.
DON'T NEED A MOOD RING TO KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING IS REALLY ROTTEN.
BAMF


THIS IS ALL A BIG NEON DISTRACTION FROM WHAT REALLY MATTERS--
--FINDING A WAY TO BE HAPPY WITH THE PERSON YOU ARE.

ARE YOU THROUGH RAMBLING, *IDIOT?*
YOU ATTEMPT TO APPEAL TO A PART OF ME THAT *NO LONGER* EXISTS.
THE BOY'S PATH WAS *ALWAYS* DESTINED TO LEAD TO *THIS.*
EVAN WAS A *DREAM.* A COCOON MASKING WHAT GREW WITHIN--
--THE TRUE SPIRIT OF EN SABAH NUR!
DUDE--*NO ONE* LIKED EN SABAH NUR!
BUT *EVERYONE* LOVES EVAN!
EVAN'S THE HOPE THAT WE CAN ALL BE *BETTER.*
THAT NO MATTER WHERE WE COME FROM, NO MATTER HOW BAD IT WAS OR WHAT PEOPLE EXPECT US TO BE--
--NURTURE CAN BEAT *NATURE.*

YOU DELUDE YOURSELF!
YOU AND YOUR X-FORCE DID NOT SET OUT ON ANY PHILOSOPHICAL SOJOURN--
YOU SLAUGHTERED MY HOST CHILD!
GLAZAT
YOU CAN KILL ME...THAT'S UP TO YOU--BUT YOU'LL REGRET IT.
SOMEDAY, THAT PART OF YOU WILL WAKE UP AND YOU'LL REGRET THIS ENTIRE ANGRY MESS.
I ALWAYS BELIEVED YOU COULD BE BETTER.
PROVING THE WORLD'S IMPRESSION OF YOU--
A BRAINDEAD FOOL!
GAKK--!
GRUCHH

TWOKK
DO YOU SEE NOW?!
SEE HOW WRONG YOU ARE!
YE RAGHH--!
YOU BELIEVED I COULD BE BETTER...
SCHUTNKK

I AM BETTER.
BETTER THAN YOU.
BETTER THAN ALL HUMANS.
I AM APOCALYPSE...
"...AND THE END OF MAN IS NIGH."
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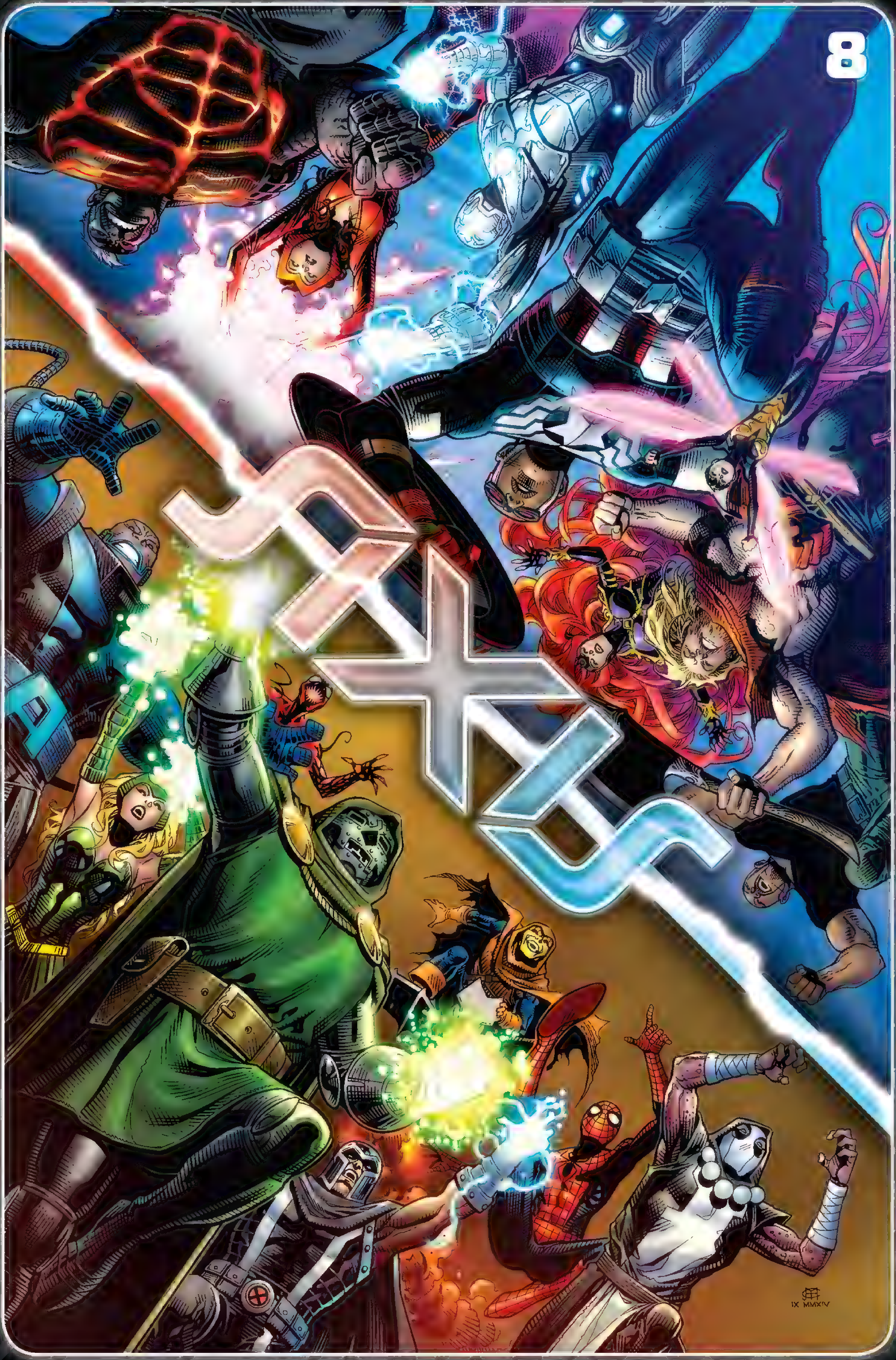
8
AXIS
IX MMXIV

WHY THEY STING

NEW WORLD DISORDER: CHAPTER 2

COME ON, COME ON...
C'MON, PETER-- *THINK.*
CELESTIAL LANGUAGE...PROBABLY HAS A DOZEN TRIPWIRES...
LISTEN TO YOUR SPIDER-SENSE-- BUZZING LEAST WHEN I LOOK AT THIS ONE--
DREEEEEP
DON'T NEED TO SPEAK CELESTIAL TO KNOW RED LIGHT MEANS *BAD!*
OKAY, *BRAINS* FAILED--
--*BRUTE* FORCE IT IS.
TEAR OUT WIRES.
TEAR OUT WIRES UNTIL IT DOESN'T BLOW UP--
NOW, I AIN'T NO SCIENCETITION...

--BUT WHAT I KNOW ABOUT BOMBS, THEY DON'T RESPOND WELL TO FORCE, KEMOSABE.
HELP ME, CLETUS--WE'LL WEB IT UP--SMOTHER THE BLAST--
NO AMOUNT OF WEBBING IS GONNA STOP THAT.
ONLY THING THAT MIGHT HOLD IT BACK--
--IS ME.
CLETUS-- THIS WILL KILL YOU.
WORLD'S BETTER OFF WITHOUT ME. CAN'T ARGUE THAT.
NO ONE IN MY FAMILY EVER DONE ANYTHING FOR ANOTHER PERSON.
COME FROM A LONG LINE OF SELFISH DIRTBAGS.
PROBABLY GOIN' BACK TO CAVEMAN KASADY STEALING PTERODACTYL EGGS FROM THE NEEDY.

YOU DO ME ONE FAVOR, SPIDEY... 'KAY?
ANYTHING.
YOU BUILD A GIANT DAMNED MEMORIAL IN MY HONOR, MADE OUT OF GOLD AN' JEWELS AN' RHINESTONES, DRAPED IN THE CONFEDERATE FLAG, RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE OF BLEEDIN' HEART LIBERAL NEW YORK CITY--
AN' I WANT IT PLAYIN' SKYNYRD'S "FREE BIRD" AROUND THE CLOCK!
I...
PROMISE.
I PROMISE, CLETUS.
ZREEEEEEEEEE
AND THIS BIRD YOU CANNOT CHAN-ANGE!
OH- OH-OHHH- OH-
GOD HELP ME, I CAN'T..
GRWOOOOOM

WAS THAT IT? DID THE GENE BOMB GO OFF?!
IT WENT OFF--BUT SOMETHING IS WRONG.
WHAT COULD HAVE STOPPED IT?!
THE WORST PERSON I EVER KNEW DOING THE NOBLEST THING I'VE EVER SEEN.
A MAN DIED STOPPING YOUR BOMB, X-MEN--
ZAKK
GAKK--!
FEAR NOT--
OOF-!
--YOU'LL SOON JOIN HIM.
YOU WISH TO WAGE WAR ON US, COSMIC DEMON--

YERAGH--!
SHNIKK
--I ENCHANTED JARNBJORN FOR SUCH A DAY!
YOU MUST HAVE *ENJOYED* HER KISS TO RETURN FOR *MORE.*
THERE IS MORE TO APOCALYPSE THAN HIS ARMOR, ASGARDIAN INTERLOPER!
AYE--A MAN WHO WOULD HAVE A BOMB TO DO HIS FIGHTING!
AVENGERS INCOMING, X-MEN! HOLD NOTHING BACK-- **KILL THEM ALL!**
FUNNY--WE WERE *JUST* SAYING THE SAME THING.
KLOOOOM
JARNBJORN WILL CRACK THAT SHELL--
THAT CELESTIAL METAL IS YOUR UNDOING!

--AND PRY FREE THE SOFT MEAT *COWERING* WITHIN!
YERAGHH--!
SHWOOOM
AMORA... GET UP.
THOR'S KILLING THEM...
...WE HAVE TO DO *SOMETHING.*
SOMETHING INCREDIBLY HEROIC?
WILL YOU HELP?
I CAN DO MORE THAN HELP, LOKI.
IF I SURVIVE, CAN I HAVE MORE?
IF WE SURVIVE, IF WE SUCCEED IN UNDOING THIS...
I'LL BE BACK TO MY *ROTTEN* OLD SELF.
ODDLY...

"...THAT MAKES ME WANT IT ALL THE MORE."
EXHAUSTED BY YOUR *PIETY.*
YOUR CEASELESS *MOANING.*
GHAAHH--!
SHWUNK
YOU IMAGINE THIS WORLD IS YOUR RIGHT.
BUT NOW YOU SEE--*NOTHING IS YOURS* WITHOUT OUR SAY.
AND ALL I WILL GIVE YOU IS *DEATH--*
DON'T YOU WORRY, LIPS McGRUESOME--
--THE GOOD GUYS'RE GONNA SAVE YER PURPLE CAN!
HAVE TA FORGIVE ME FER GOIN' BOASTFUL--
--I HIT HARDER WHEN I'M *INDIGNANT.*
OWOOOOM
ABSORBIN' YER AXE'S METAL DON'T HURT NONE EITHER.
YOU FORGET YOURSELF.
SOME *MISGUIDED* PITY HAS STAYED MY HAND FROM YOUR EXECUTION IN THE PAST, *MONGREL--*

DOOOOOM
--A MISTAKE I WILL *RECTIFY.*
GRAAGH--!
KRASHWOOOOOM
COULDN'T HAVE SAID IT BETTER *MYSELF.*
I HOPE THOSE WORDS WERE WELL CHOSEN.
THEY WILL BE YOUR *LAST.*
I DOUBT IT, MAN, I MEAN, THESE ARE THE SUMMERS BROTHERS.
THEY *NEVER* SHUT--
KRAKOOM

QUITE A THROW FOR A PRIDEFUL FRAUD.
A LOUTISH BRAGGART WHO CAN'T LIFT THE HAMMER THAT IS HIS BIRTHRIGHT.
LOKI.
YOU WILL DIE FOR YOUR WORDS, BROTHER.
VIDEO
TWUNG
I CAN'T LIE.
IT'S WHY THEY STING.
HOW IT MUST VEX YOU.
KWOKK
MUCH AS YOU DO, LOKI.
MUCH AS YOU WILL BE REMEMBERED.
TROOM
LOOK AT HIM, THOR!
HE IS YOUR BROTHER-- YOUR BLOOD!
LOOK INTO YOUR HEART AND YOU WILL SEE--
--YOU DO LOVE HIM.

LOKI IS NO BLOOD OF MINE!
THE *LOVE* YOU SEEK TO BRING FORTH IS QUICKLY *INVERTED* TO *HATE*, FETID TEMPTRESS.
SERVING TO INCREASE MY RAGE!
IT'S WORKED-- NOW GO, LOKI!
THAT'S IT, YOU OAF...
...BLINDLY CHASE THE TRICKSTER...
...AND LET US SEE WHO IS *TRULY*
YOUR SCREAMS SHALL BE WORTHY OF SONG--
YOUR DEATH UNENDING!
YOU WILL *SUFFER.*
YOUR BONES DELIVERED TO THE ICY PIT THAT BORE THEM.
I SWEAR IT, YOU BASTARD ABOMINATION--

"--THIS TIME I KILL YOU."
AVENGERS MANSION.
OUR AVENGERS ARE NEARLY ALL DOWN, DAD.
THOSE X-MEN CAN'T STOP THE AXIS FOR MUCH LONGER...
...AND EVEN IF THEY DO--*WE* CAN'T STOP *THEM.*
THE STORIES YOU TOLD ME ABOUT THIS WORLD, THE ENDLESS *INSANITY...*
NO WORDS CAN DESCRIBE THE TERROR OF SO MANY LIVES IN THE BALANCE SO OFTEN, SON.
I HAVE TO GET OUT THERE AND HELP.
WE'RE THE ONLY ONES WHO CAN PUT TOGETHER A BACKUP PLAN IF THIS ALL FAILS, IAN.
THIS ISN'T HOPELESS, THERE'S ALWAYS A WAY--*WE WILL FIND IT.*
I THINK I MIGHT BE ABLE TO HELP YOU WITH *THAT.*
JARVIS!
MY GOD, OLD MAN--I FEARED THE WORST.
AS WELL YOU *SHOULD,* CAPTAIN ROGERS.
OUR FRIENDS HAVE *QUITE* LOST THEIR MINDS...

"...BUT I THINK I KNOW A WAY TO SET THEM BACK."
SKREE
SPIT IT OUT, *RUNT*--WHERE YOU HIDIN' RED SKULL?!
TELL ME *NOW* AN' I GIVE YOU THE *QUICK DEATH,* OTHERWISE--
KLUH'S GONNA HAVE HIM SOME FUN!
ONLY IF BLEEDIN' IS YOUR IDEA OF FUN.
ALL OF YOU WHIMPERING MUTANT DOGS WILL BE TRANSPLANTED BY INHUMAN SUPERIORITY!
INHUMANS, MUTANTS, GODS-- CALL YOURSELVES WHAT YOU WANT--
--I'LL BUG-STOMP ANYONE IN MY WAY!
THE DEFAULT HUMAN DICTUM IN MOST REGARDS.
KROOOM
WE WILL SUFFER YOUR BOOTS NO MORE!
KRAKOOOM

EVAN-- LISTEN TO ME!
XAVIER?
SEE WHAT YOU HAVE DONE--*THE SUFFERING!*
YOUR HATE WILL DOOM US ALL.
THE CYCLE OF DEATH WILL NEVER END!
I BEG YOU, PLEASE, PUT DOWN YOUR--
THE INEPT CHARLES XAVIER MEANS NOTHING TO ME.
KROOOM
GRAAAH--!
YOU SHOULD KNOW THIS, MYSTIQUE.
SKULKING *SKIN-SHIFTER.*
BETRAYER OF OUR PEOPLE.
SERVANT OF OUR OPPRESSORS.
FEEL THE PRICE OF YOUR *TREACHERY--*
WELL, SEEIN' AS HOW SHE'S SUCH A PRETTY LADY--

--WHY DONTCHA LET ME PICK UP THE TAB!
KRA-TWOOOOM
LATVERIA.
YOU CAN'T IMAGINE THE JOY I FEEL KNOWING YOU ARE *NOTHING* TO ME, MAGNETO.
THE ELATION AT REPAYING DOOM'S *CRUELTY* AS I PLUNGE HIS HOMELAND INTO *CHAOS*--
WANDA...
I KNOW THE PAIN THAT LINGERS IN YOUR MIND.

...NOTHING CAN UNDO WHAT YOU'VE SUFFERED IN THE PAST.
IF YOU FALL TO THIS EVIL--
--YOU'LL NEVER BE FREE OF IT.
THERE IS GOOD IN THE WORLD.
BETTER DAYS AWAIT US--BUT YOU HAVE TO BE STRONGER THAN THE RAGE.
KILLING THESE PEOPLE WILL NOT BE SOME MANIPULATION--IT WILL BE YOUR CHOOSING!
THIS FROM A MAN WHOSE LIFE IS DEDICATED TO MURDEROUS VENGEANCE!
THE MAN WHOSE RAGE SET THIS ALL IN MOTION.
IT WILL CURSE YOUR SOUL!
ZOOOOOM
I AM CURSED!
AND THE WORLD WILL JOIN IN MY PAIN.
YOU HAVE EVERY RIGHT TO YOUR RAGE--

BUT YOU WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO SPREAD IT.
TAKE HER, DANIEL.

YOUR DEAL WITH DOOM IS *YOUR OWN*, MY BROTHER!
I TAKE NO JOY IN AIDING THESE AVENGERS *SWINE*--
--THOUGH IT IS A *PLEASURE* TO SAVE REALITY FROM THEIR *STUPIDITY*.
THERE IS NO FIGHTING MY POSSESSION, WITCH.
I WILL NOT ALLOW THE WORLD TO BURN FOR YOUR HUBRIS!
GET OUT-- **RELEASE ME!**
WHAT HAVE YOU DONE, DOOM?!
MADE A FAUSTIAN PACT WITH A DEMIGOD TO RESURRECT DOCTOR VOODOO AND HIS BROTHER, THE ONLY BEINGS CAPABLE OF POSSESSING THIS RAMPAGING SORCERESS.
STAVE YOUR ANGER, MAGNETO.
MY BROTHER'S POSSESSION WILL NOT HARM HER.
DANIEL IS RISKING HIS VERY ESSENCE WITHSTANDING THE MADNESS WITHIN HER.
IF I AM TO BELIEVE THE HORRORS DOOM CONVEYED--

"--WE WILL SOON NEED HER."
DAD, THINGS AREN'T GOING WELL UP HERE.
THAT HULK IS BACK, HE AND THOR ARE TAKING DOWN *EVERYONE*.
HOW MUCH LONGER?
A MINUTE, MAYBE LESS.
STAY PUT.
KEEP ME INFORMED ON WHAT'S HAPPENING--DON'T WORRY.
I'LL GET THIS DONE.
ONE WAY OR ANOTHER--
--I *WILL* LIBERATE THE RED SKULL.
CREEL--I NEED A *HAND* OVER HERE!
SORRY, WEB-HEAD--
KRADOOM
--BOTH O' MINE'RE *BUSY!*
YOU'RE GONNA NEED 'EM WHILE YOU'RE BEGGIN' ME TA *DIE*, ABSORBING MAN!
HUGN--!

DO YOU FEEL *ANY* PRIDE IN THOSE COLORS YOU WEAR?
OR JUST PRIDE AT THE ELITE FEW THEY ACTUALLY SERVE?
TWOKK
THWOOM
RAIN-CHECK ON THE PITY PARTY, HAVOK.
I NEED YOUR DANCE PARTNER.
I'VE PICKED UP A COMMUNICATION BETWEEN STEVE ROGERS AND THAT ZOLA RAT HE CALLS SON.
I DON'T THINK THE X-MEN HAVE THE RED SKULL.
WHO ELSE COULD HAVE TAKEN THE SKULL?!
I DON'T THINK HE WAS TAKEN.
I THINK THAT OLD FOOL JARVIS USED ONE OF MY CLOAKING DEVICES TO HIDE HIM FROM YOU, AND UNLESS I'M MISTAKEN...
...STEVE ROGERS IS EN ROUTE TO GET HIM RIGHT NOW.
THEN LET'S PUT THAT RELIC INTO THE GROUND WHERE HE BELONGS.

A MAN OF METAL TAKES TO MY SKIES--
--HE MUST WEATHER THE ***UNRELENTING*** STORM!
CAP-- **GO!**
I'LL HOLD STORM OFF--
"--YOU KILL ROGERS."
OH, YOU ***GOTTA*** BE KIDDING ME.
THERE'S TOO MUCH AT STAKE, SAM--

--I'M GETTING HIM OUT OF HERE.
STAND DOWN--
--OR I CAN'T GUARANTEE YOUR SAFETY.

AXIS #1 VARIANT
BY SIYA OUM

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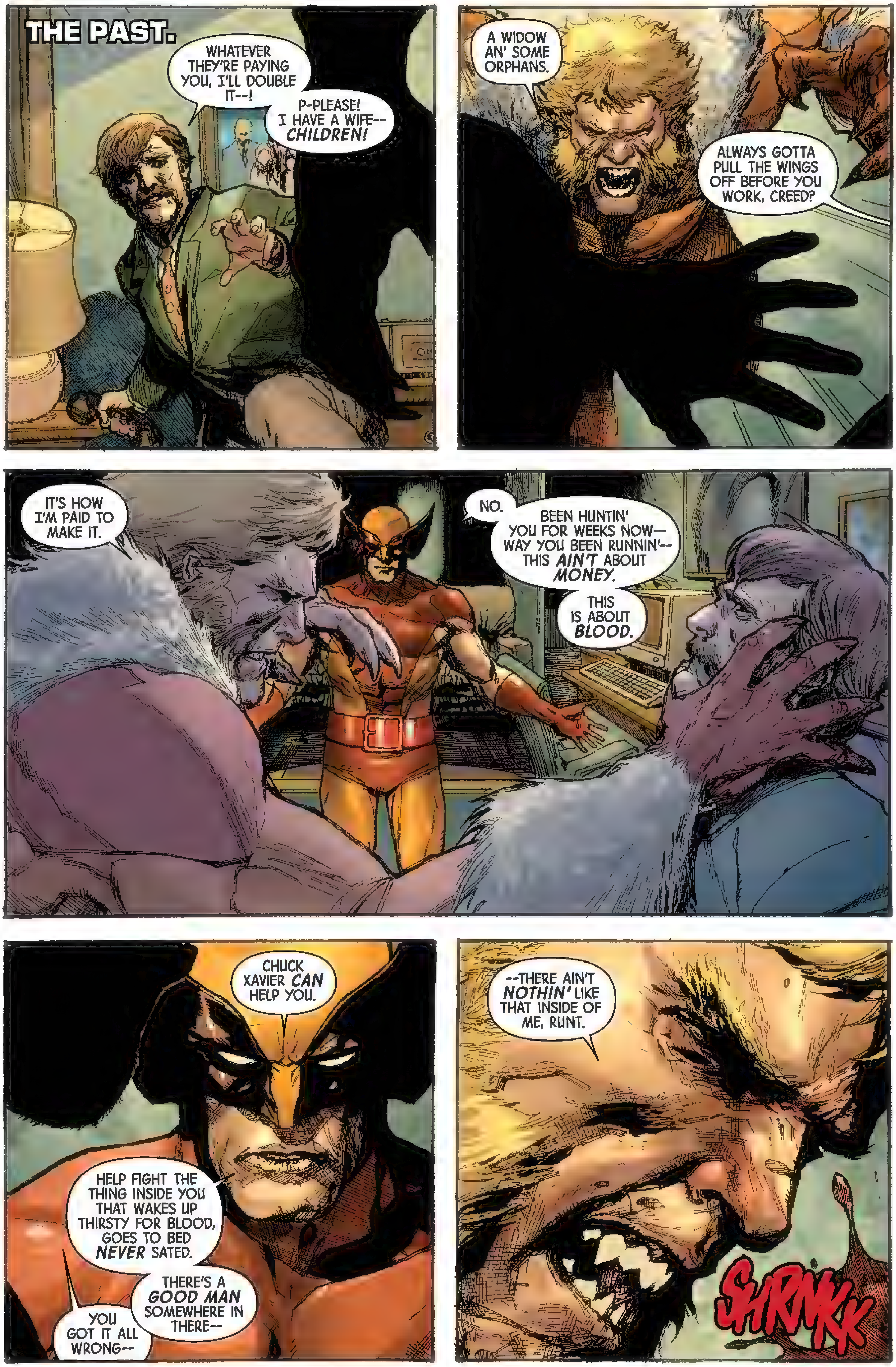
AXIS
VIII · MMXIV


THE PAST.
WHATEVER THEY'RE PAYING YOU, I'LL DOUBLE IT--!
P-PLEASE! I HAVE A WIFE-- *CHILDREN!*
A WIDOW AN' SOME ORPHANS.
ALWAYS GOTTA PULL THE WINGS OFF BEFORE YOU WORK, CREED?
IT'S HOW I'M PAID TO MAKE IT.
NO.
BEEN HUNTIN' YOU FOR WEEKS NOW-- WAY YOU BEEN RUNNIN'-- THIS *AIN'T* ABOUT *MONEY.*
THIS IS ABOUT *BLOOD.*
CHUCK XAVIER *CAN* HELP YOU.
HELP FIGHT THE THING INSIDE YOU THAT WAKES UP THIRSTY FOR BLOOD, GOES TO BED *NEVER* SATED.
THERE'S A *GOOD MAN* SOMEWHERE IN THERE--
YOU GOT IT ALL WRONG--
--THERE AIN'T *NOTHIN'* LIKE THAT INSIDE OF ME, RUNT.
SHRNKK

GRINDING HALT

NEW WORLD DISORDER: CHAPTER 3

AVENGERS TOWER. NOW.
MY ALLIES HAVE GONE MAD.
DROP THE NAZI OR I'LL KILL YOU, OLD MAN!
YOU'RE *TOO* SMART NOT TO SEE WHAT'S GOING ON HERE, SAM.
AVENGERS, X-MEN, OR INHUMANS--ANYONE ON GENOSHA WHEN THE SPELL WAS CAST--
KWUNGG
--THE INVERSION ECHOED BY SKULL'S TELEPATHY--HITTING THEM ALL.
YOU KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?
THE HATED MONSTER WHO I NOW HAVE TO SAVE--
--IN HOPES OF REVERTING THIS *MADNESS.*
FOR THE FIRST TIME IN MY LIFE-- *I'M FREE.*
TWOKK
UGN--!

FREE OF YOUR REGULATIONS AND EXPECTATIONS--
FREE TO DO WHAT'S *BEST* FOR *ME!*
I'M NOT GOING TO LET *HIM* TAKE THAT AWAY!
THE OLD ARMOR *HELPS*--
KWOKK
OOF--!
--BUT IT'S *NOT* ENOUGH.
STILL RELIES ON *MY* STRENGTH--
--STRENGTH I *DON'T* HAVE ANYMORE.
THE TWO OF YOU DYING TOGETHER-- IT'S *PERFECT* REALLY.
YERAGH--!
KRAKK
NO MORE SUPER-SOLDIER SERUM--
--REFLEXES SLOW-- NOTHING RESPONDS AS IT SHOULD--
THE TWO *EGOTISTS* WHO MANIPULATED ME INTO THIS LIFE OF *LIES*--
--THIS LIFE OF *EMPTY SACRIFICE!*
--IF I FALTER--
--HE'D KILL ME WITHOUT HESITATION--

--IF I WERE ACTUALLY THERE.
SRUNGG
IF I WERE DUMB ENOUGH TO ENGAGE HIM.
W-WHAT IS THIS?!
FACE ME, YOU COWARD!
HOW MUCH TIME DO WE HAVE BEFORE SAM FINDS US?
A FEW MINUTES...
I AM STILL TRANQUILIZED... PREVENTING ME FROM USING MY TELEPATHIC POWERS TO THEIR FULLEST.
YOUR PARTNER IS ALREADY FREE OF MY MNEMONIC FICTION.
I CANNOT CONTINUE THIS PACE.
I AM WEARY.
YOU LOOK TERRIBLE, STEVE.
STEVE? THE WAY YOU SAY THAT...
...KINDNESS.
THE HORROR I'VE CAUSED...I'M SORRY.
I'M SO SORRY.
ONE THING AT A TIME. THE AVENGERS PLAN TO KILL THE X-MEN...
CAN YOU REVERT THEM? CAN YOU FIX THIS?
I...
I CAN BROADCAST A REVERSION--IF WE CAN RECREATE THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF ONSLAUGHT'S DEFEAT, THE CHAOS AND ORDER ENERGIES...
IS THAT A YES?
I'LL TRY, STEVE.
AFTER ALL...

"...IT'S NOT EVERY DAY THE *RED SKULL* GETS AN OPPORTUNITY TO *SAVE THE WORLD.*"
CAGE, ROUND UP THE STRAGGLERS. GOTTA GET OUR DUCKS IN A ROW.
YOU WANNA BE A ***BIT*** MORE SPECIFIC, STARK?
JUST SAY IT, TINMAN-- ***MURDER*** 'EM.
KLUH AGREED TA TAKE OUT THE UNDESIRABLES--DON'T HAVE TA SIT FER NO PRETTY CORPORATE SPEAK.
*THE SMART BUSINESSMAN ALWAYS FINDS A **FLOWERY SLOGAN** FOR A **DESPICABLE ACT.***
TONY, YOU WERE RIGHT--!
STORY OF MY LIFE.
STEVE HAS THE SKULL--***HE'S GOING TO REVERT US!***
FINE.
LET'S GO.
*SEEMS NO MATTER **HOW** MANY MIDDLEMEN I EMPLOY--*

"--I ALWAYS HAVE TO DO *EVERYTHING* MYSELF."
HERO BUSINESS AIN'T ALL IT'S CRACKED UP TO BE, HUH, FRAIL?
WATCH WHO YOU'RE CALLING FRAIL, CREED.
SORRY.
OLD HABITS.
DONE GOOD OUT THERE, RAVEN. FOUGHT FOR THE ANGELS.
SHOWED ANNA MARIE HER REAL STEPMOM.
AWFUL DAMN PROUD TO 'AVE BEEN BY YOUR SIDE.
SOUNDS *TERRIBLY* FATALISTIC.
STARK AIN'T GONNA LEAVE ANY O' US ALIVE.
I'M COOKED--NO FIGHT LEFT.
NOT TOO MUCH DIFFERENT FROM THE FIRST TIME WE MET...
"...WE NEARLY KILLED EACH OTHER.
"BEFORE WE RAVAGED EACH OTHER.
"YOU FOUND STRENGTH FOR *THAT* FIGHT."
HEH...*THAT* SCRAP HAD A DIFFERENT PAYOUT.
WE FELL INTO THE BLACK HOLE TOGETHER, BECAUSE WE NEEDED SOMEONE TO COME DOWN WITH US.
NOW THE WORLD'S HEROES ARE IN THAT SAME DARK PLACE.
THE WORLD *CAN'T* SURVIVE WITHOUT THE X-MEN OR AVENGERS--
GO, VICTOR--HELP ROGERS--REVERT US.
THAT MEANS...
WE HAVE TO FALL BACK INTO THAT BLACK HOLE.
THAT'S A HOLE YOU NEVER SHOULDA CRAWLED OUT OF, *MOTHER--*

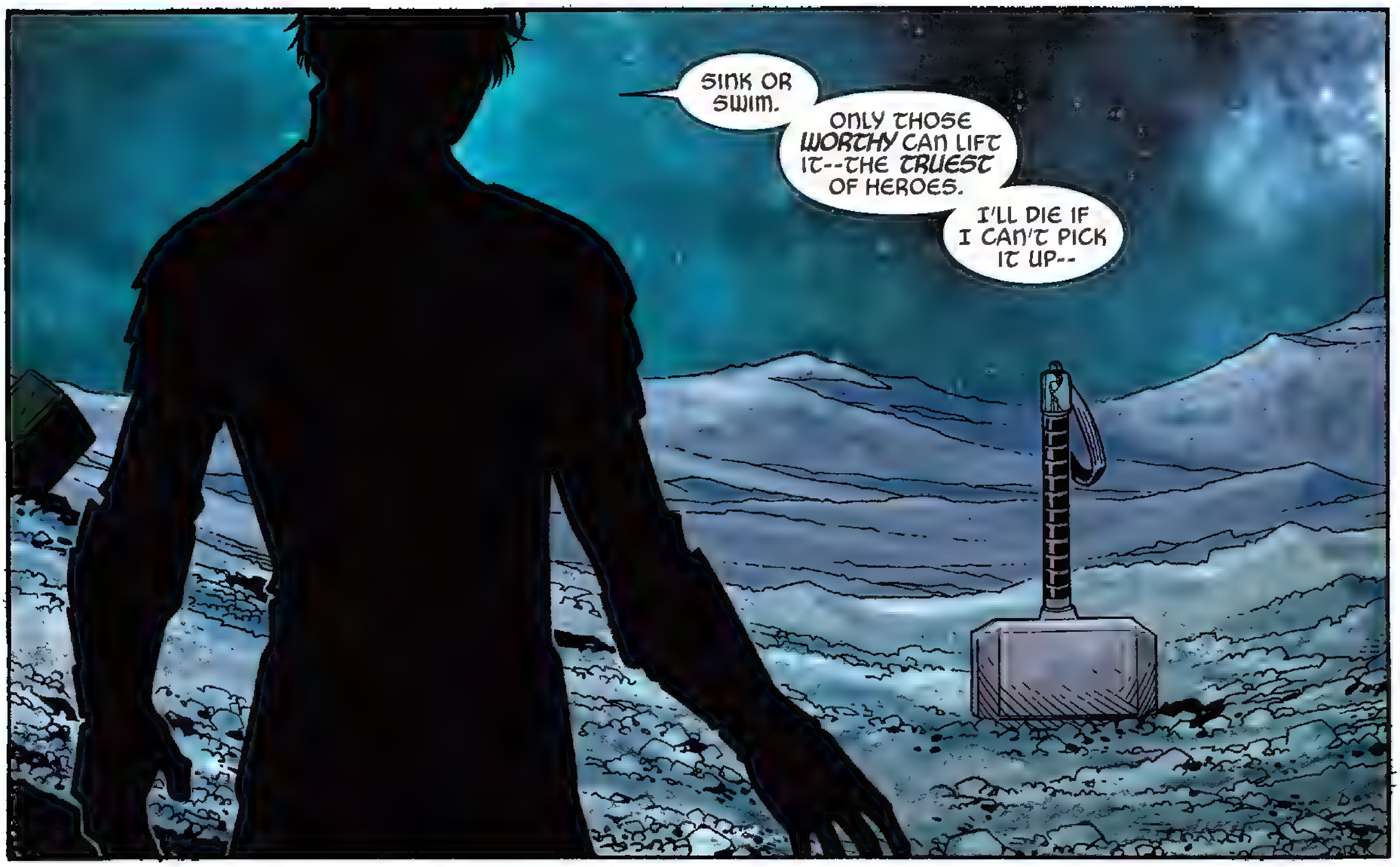
--BUT ONE I'LL *GLADLY* PUT YOU BACK IN.
TWOOOOM
RUN, RAVEN!
GIVE ME A HERO MOMENT BEFORE IT'S ALL GONE!
SHRKK
SHE AIN'T GETTIN' FAR.
DON'T YOU WORRY, CREED--
DWOOOOM
--GONNA DO JUST WHAT *YOU* WOULD--
HUNT HER DOWN--BRING HER BACK--
--AND KILL HER IN FRONT OF YOU.
HOLY GUACAMOLE--

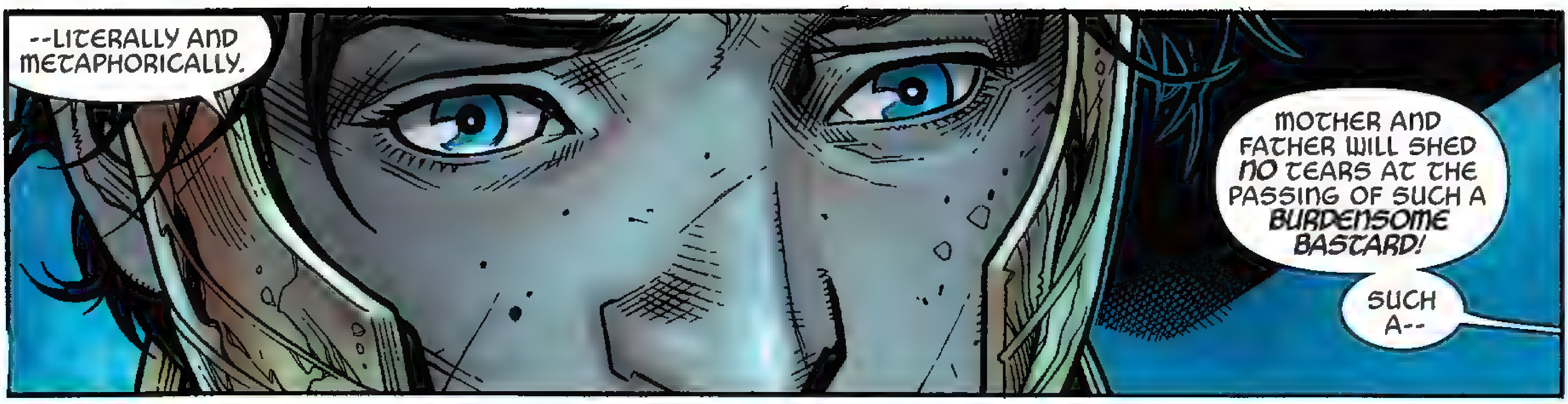
--THAT'S A SPICY MEATBALL!
FOOL! WHAT ARE YOU RAMBLING ABOUT?
THWIPP
SORRY, IT'S BEEN A LONG DAY...
"...AND I'M RUNNING LOW ON QUIPS."
HURRY! GET IT TOGETHER, JANET!
I NEED YOUR HELP!
MY HELP--?!
YOU WERE GOING TO KILL ME, ALEX!
KILL US ALL!
NEVER! I NEVER WOULD HAVE ALLOWED IT!
WOULD I ALLOW YOU TO DIE?
TO ALLOW OUR DAUGHTER TO NEVER BE BORN?
"IF WE WANT KATIE BACK, WE HAVE TO STAY TOGETHER--TO GET YOU PREGNANT.
"I WOULDN'T RISK THAT!
"I WAS GOING TO REBUILD PLANET X--FOR US!"
REBUILD THE WORLD WHERE WE WERE A HAPPY FAMILY!
AND RIGHT NOW ROGERS IS TRYING TO STOP THAT!
TRYING TO TAKE IT ALL AWAY--UNDO EVERYTHING--!

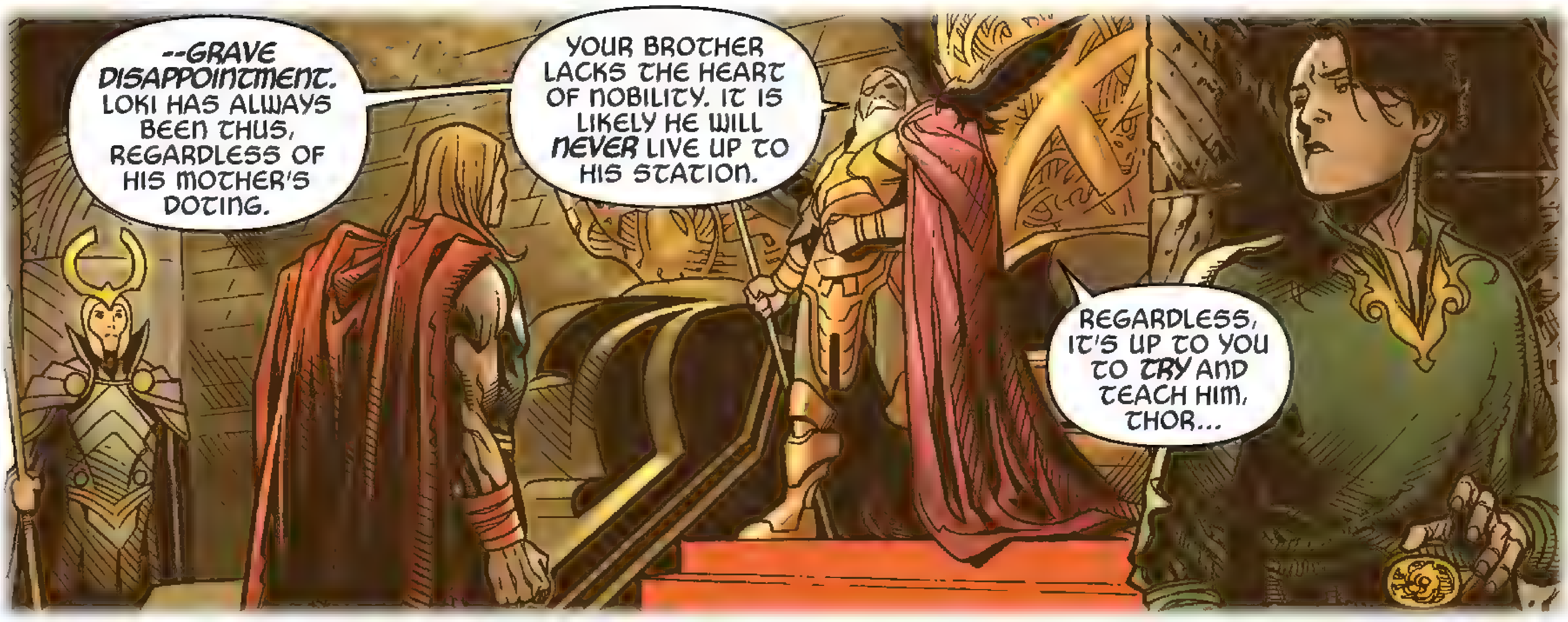
WE NEED TO KILL THE SKULL BEFORE IT'S UNDONE--*BEFORE WE LOSE OUR FUTURE!*
WHAT IS THIS... CARNAGE?
WAIT A SECOND...
YOU DIDN'T STOP THE BOMB...
...THEY DID!
GAZZAK
GHA--
STOP--I-I'M SORRY!
YOU'LL *PAY* FOR THIS, YOU SELF-SERVING *COWARD!*
"YOU'LL DIE WITH THE REST OF THE MUTANTS!"
LOST...
AN END TO THE SUFFERING OF MY PEOPLE--GONE.
MY X-MEN... OVERPOWERED...
OUR FUTURE...OUR PROSPERITY...
...ALL LOST.
NOT IF YOU FLIP THE SCRIPT, EVAN.

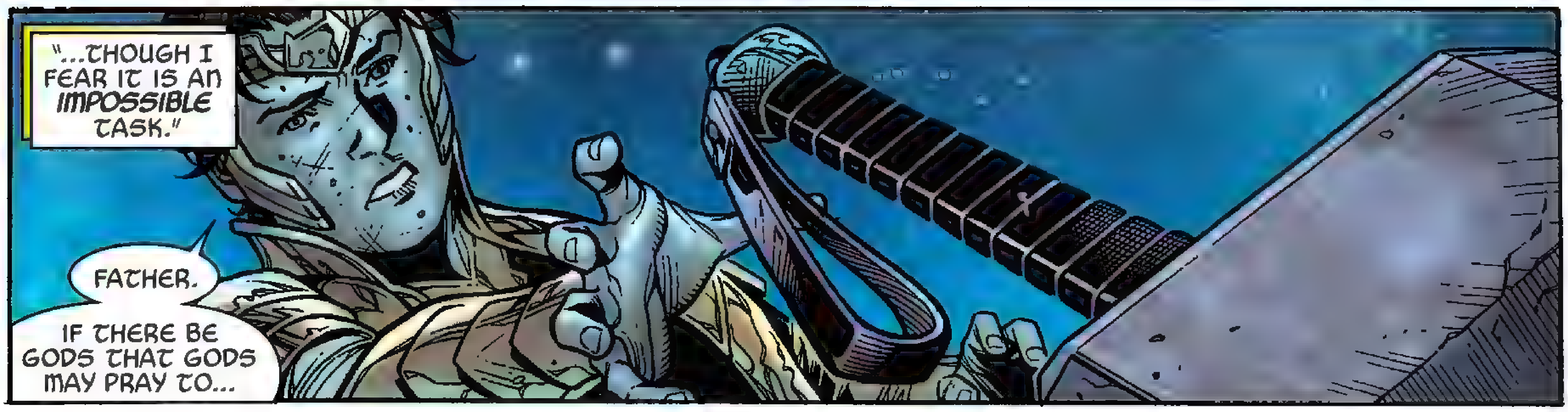
WADE?
TIME TO RISE AND HELP THE GOOD GUYS.
IF THEY KILL SKULL... IT'S ALL OVER.
WE'RE ALL STUCK LIKE THIS. WHICH IS GROOVY FOR ME, BUT YOU...
THE THING THAT INVERSION BROUGHT OUT--THAT EVIL, THE SEED OF HIM, ALWAYS INSIDE YOU--NO SO BUENO.
THIS *AIN'T* THE REAL YOU, LI'L BUDDY.
YOU WERE RAISED BY PEOPLE WHO *LOVE* YOU.
"PEOPLE TAUGHT YOU DIFFERENT--TAUGHT YOU TO OVERCOME THOSE BAD GENES.
"ANYONE CAN DEAL WITH ADVERSITY AND BEING DOWN--IT'S WHAT YOU DO WHEN YOU HAVE POWER THAT DEFINES YOU.
"YOU KNOW WHO SAID THAT?"
ABE LINCOLN, BROTHER.
AIN'T GONNA IGNORE HONEST ABE, ARE YA?
THERE IS *NO* PART OF THAT *SNIVELING INFANT* EVAN WITHIN ME!
BALONEY. THE INVERSION FLIPPED YOU, BROUGHT OUT EVIL GENIE APOCALYPSE.
BUT YOU CAN FIGHT HIM.
YOU'RE IN THERE--*BURIED*.
C'MON. IT'S TIME TO BE SUPER, EVAN...
...IT'S TIME TO SAVE THE DAY.

THE MOON.
YOU CAN'T HIDE, BROTHER!
THIS PLOY, WHATEVER REASON YOU BROUGHT US HERE FOR, PRETTY GAME PLAYER--
--IT WILL AVAIL YOU NOT!
AND YOU'LL NOT BE SO PRETTY WHEN JARNBJORN IS DONE WITH YOU!
OKAY--HE'S GOOD AND CRAZY.
NO PROBLEM GETTING LORD LOUDINGTON TO CHASE ME.
NOW FOR MY GREAT, IDIOTIC EMBARRASSMENT...
STOP--NONE OF THAT. MUST STAY POSITIVE--ALL ON THE LINE NOW.
AND NOT JUST FOR THEM--
--MY ONE CHANCE TO ESCAPE FATE, TO ESCAPE MY ROTTEN FUTURE.
NO PRESSURE.
RUN AS FAST AS YOU CAN--BUT I AM COMING, YOU PREENING HALF-A-MAN!
STEVE ROGERS MADE YOU AN AVENGER.
THEY'RE COUNTING ON YOU.
IF THOR GOES BACK DOWN THERE IT'S GOING TO BE A BLOODBATH--HE'S YOUR BROTHER--
"--HE'S YOUR RESPONSIBILITY."
DEATH IS COMING!
COME NOW--WHERE IS THAT BRAVERY YOU FEIGNED BEFORE?!


SINK OR SWIM.
ONLY THOSE *WORTHY* CAN LIFT IT--THE *TRUEST* OF HEROES.
I'LL DIE IF I CAN'T PICK IT UP--


--LITERALLY AND METAPHORICALLY.
MOTHER AND FATHER WILL SHED *NO* TEARS AT THE PASSING OF SUCH A *BURDENSOME BASTARD!*
SUCH A--


--GRAVE DISAPPOINTMENT. LOKI HAS ALWAYS BEEN THUS, REGARDLESS OF HIS MOTHER'S DOTING.
YOUR BROTHER LACKS THE HEART OF NOBILITY. IT IS LIKELY HE WILL *NEVER* LIVE UP TO HIS STATION.
REGARDLESS, IT'S UP TO YOU TO *TRY* AND TEACH HIM, THOR...


"...THOUGH I FEAR IT IS AN *IMPOSSIBLE* TASK."
FATHER.
IF THERE BE GODS THAT GODS MAY PRAY TO...

"...LET ME HAVE *TRULY* CHANGED."
AFTER I HAVE KILLED YOU I WILL KILL YOUR FRIENDS!
ANYONE TAINTED BY YOUR LOVE!
I WILL ENSURE THEY KNOW IT WAS *YOUR* FAILURE THAT INCURRED *MY* WRATH.
YOU FIND THE TRUTH SO TO YOUR LIKING NOW, *"BROTHER"*?
HERE IS THE TRUTH.
I NEVER LOVED YOU!
NEITHER DID FATHER! NOR MOTHER!
THAT IS THE TRUTH.
YOU ARE A BURDEN-- *A GRAVE DISAPPOINTMENT TO YOUR FAMILY!*
HOW MUCH MORE HEARTBROKEN THEY MUST BE--

--AT THE CHOSEN'S FAILURE TO LIFT HIS OWN HAMMER!
CRAKROOOOM

AVENGERS MANSION.
IAN...
HE'S WEAK--IN NEED OF MEDICAL ATTENTION.
DAD--!
NEVER THOUGHT I'D BE HAPPY TO SEE *THAT* FACE.
ARMOR HELPS, BUT...I CAN'T KEEP IT UP.
TOO *DAMN* OLD...
I HAVE SHMIDT'S MEMORIES. I KNOW THE TYPE OF OPPONENT YOU ARE--
THE KIND THAT *ALWAYS* STANDS UP.
ALMOST THERE, SOLDIER.
I CAN REVERT THEM ALL--BUT WE NEED TO FIND DOOM AND STRANGE--
AN INVERTED SCARLET WITCH WILL NOT BE INTERESTED IN AIDING US.
DR. STRANGE DISAPPEARED WITH THE REST OF THE HEROES.
THEN WE MUST FIND THEM--
RIGHT NOW WE'VE GOT BIGGER PROBLEMS--

SOMEONE SAY MY NAME?!
KA-BOOOOOM
BARBARIC MONSTER!
YOUR MIND IS NO MATCH FOR MY TELEPATHY EVEN IN A WEAKENED--
RAIN CHECK ON THE MIND GAMES.
YERAGH--!
BLAZAK

YOU STILL IN THERE, XAVIER?
'CAUSE I GOT SOMETHING TO TELL YOU.
THOSE STARK SENTINELS--I'M REBUILDING THEM FOR SALE.
TO WIPE OUT ALL THE MUTANTS FOREVER--
--AND AFTER WHAT YOUR X-MEN TRIED TO DO TODAY--BUSINESS WILL BE BOOMING.
YOU HEAR THAT, CHARLES?
STARK SENTINELS MARCHING IN THE STREETS!
CHOKK
KEEPING HUMANS SAFE FROM YOUR MUTATED FREAKS AND KEEPING ME RICH!
THAT'S YOUR LEGACY, PROFESSOR!
GHRAGH--!
GAZZAAKK
DAD! STARK'S KILLING SKULL!
GET HIM--GO!
KRAKK

NAH--BETTER YOU STAY AN' *WATCH,* POPS!
KROOM
OOF--!
KLUH LOVES AN AUDIENCE.
GET OFF OF MY SON BEFORE I--
BEFORE WHAT, OLD MAN?
DOOOOM
FINALLY FREE OF THE *GARBAGE* YOU FILLED MY HEAD WITH!
KWUNGG
FREE TO GET WHAT I'M OWED!

IT'S NOT GARBAGE, SAM... IT'S DUTY...
I DIDN'T TEACH YOU THAT-- YOUR FATHER DID...
...HE DIED TO STOP PEOPLE FIGHTING.
MY FATHER GAVE HIS LIFE FOR NOTHING!
BY HELPING PEOPLE WHO FORGOT HIM, HE ABANDONED HIS FAMILY!
HE DIED FOR AN IDEAL.
THE SAME ONE YOU'RE THROWING AWAY.
HEY!
I GOT A DREAM, OLD MAN!
FER YOU TA SEE WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE WHEN I TEAR YOUR SON IN HALF!
I HATE TO BE A BUZZKILL--

--BUT THAT'S A *TERRIBLE* DREAM, BROTHER.
RA-DOOOOM
OH, SON OF A--
RAGADWOOOOOOOM

GO!
I'LL HOLD THEM OFF!
ZAAKKK
GET SKULL OUT OF HERE!
CONFUSED, BUT NOT ABOUT TO LOOK THIS GIFT HORSE IN THE MOUTH.
THE QUINJET IS PREPARED.
WE SHOULD HELP THAT PURPLE MAN!
IRON MAN'S TELEPATHIC DAMPENER IS STILL IN EFFECT, I NEED A FEW MINUTES TO RECOVER--
NO. WE'RE GETTING YOU OUT OF HERE.
CAN'T RISK ANYTHING HAPPENING TO YOU, SHMIDT.
THAT'S AWFUL SWEET.
DOOOOM

GHRAGH--!
SWEET LIKE CHRISTMAS?
C'MON, CAGE, THEY CUED YOU PERFECT FOR THAT ONE.
TWIPP
GOTTA LOVE THE NICK-OF-TIME-TYPE SAVES.
I ALWAYS SHOOT FOR AT LEAST ONE PER BATTLE, BUT TWO?
HOME RUN.
LAY IN, SABRETOOTH!
WE HAVE TO BUY STEVE A CHANCE TO ESCAPE!
YOU CAN'T AFFORD IT.
AND I CAN'T AFFORD YOU TAKING THIS FROM ME.
HOLD ON T--
KROOOOOOM

NOT ANOTHER STEP!
KID--
KWOKK
YOU'RE IN NO POSITION TO GIVE ORDERS.
AS MUCH AS YOUR FAMILY LOVES TO DO SO.
TONY...
PLEASE, LISTEN...
HMM...
GLAZAK
NO.
I'M NOT GOING BACK.
I LIKE WHO I AM--
HOW UNFORTUNATE FOR YOU--

--THAT DOOM DOES *NOT.*
AND YOUR DOMINATION DOESN'T FIT OUR PURPOSE.
AND OUR PURPOSE IS THE GOOD OF MANKIND!
I'M SORRY--THE WORLD CANNOT SURVIVE YOUR *BRILLIANCE* TURNED TO EVIL, STARK.
WENCHHH
GHRAGH--!
STOP!
YOU'RE KILLING HIM, ERIK.
I SEE *NO* OTHER SOLUTION.
IT WAS THIS *SAME* LINE OF THINKING THAT LED YOU TO *KILL ME!*
GHRAGH--!
YOUR CHOICE OF SOLUTION RELEASED ONSLAUGHT--*CAUSED ALL OF THIS!*
PLEASE. STOP NOW, OLD FRIEND.
THAT VOICE...

CAST THE DAMN SPELL.
TWUDD
THERE IS NO PICKING OR CHOOSING WHO WILL BE AFFECTED-- IT'S ALL OR NOTHING.
WE'LL BE RETURNED TO THE MONSTERS WE ONCE WERE, SHMIDT.
IT'S THE SACRIFICE WE MUST MAKE.
PERHAPS WE WILL BECOME BETTER MEN EVEN WITHOUT THE INVERSION.
WE BOTH KNOW BETTER THAN *THAT.*
ONCE I CAST *ORDER,* YOU MUST USE WANDA'S MEMORIES TO OPEN THE NEXUS OF *CHAOS,* DANIEL DRUMM.
DO NOT CONDESCEND TO ME, DOOM. I'VE ALREADY DONE IT.
ONCE BATHED IN THE ENERGIES, I WILL BROADCAST THE INVERSION AND UNDO THE EFFECTS OF THE ORIGINAL SPELL–
NO!

I WON'T GO BACK!
I COULDN'T SURVIVE KNOWING WHAT I'VE DONE!
WOOOOOOOM
GHAGHH--!
YOU WON'T HAVE TO.
BLAZZAT
YEAGH--!
CEASE THIS INSANITY OR I WILL CORDON YOU WITHIN THE BILE PITS OF OGOUN!
SHWOOOM
IF I'M WILLIN' TO GO BACK TO BEIN' A SAVAGE BEAST--YOU GOTTA HANDLE GETTING YOUR BOY SCOUT BADGE BACK, HAVOK!
SHREDD
GHRAH--!
NOW!
BEFORE MORE ARRIVE-- CAST THE SPELL!
GOODBYE, VON DOOM.

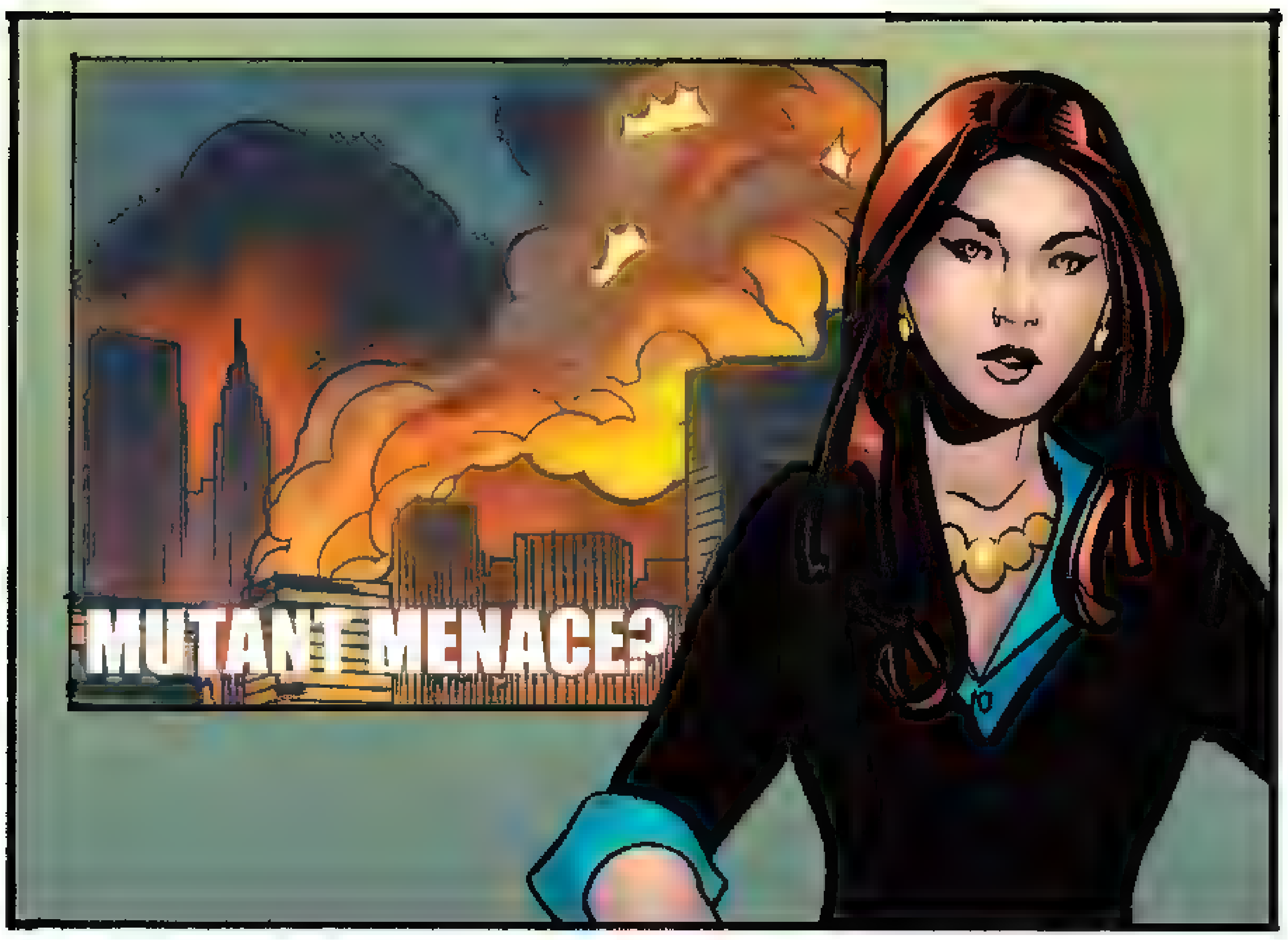
NO!
LET US CLEANSE THIS POISON.
I WON'T GO BACK!
I WON'T!
WHICH IS WHY I PREPARED FOR THIS.
ZREEEEE
KRAKOOOOOOOOM

THE MOON.
HOW DOES IT FEEL, THOR? TO BE THE ONE FALLEN?!
TO BE THE FAILURE DEFEATED BY THE NOBLE HERO?
HOW DOES IT FEEL TO KNOW-- I AM MORE WORTHY THAN YOU?!
WHOOOOOOOOOM
GRA--
THWUMP
NO...
WHAT TRICKERY IS THIS? W-WHERE--? WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO ME?!
I DEFEATED YOU!
I--I WAS THE GOD OF THUNDER!
I RECALL NO SUCH THING.
CERTAINLY IT IS ANOTHER LIE...
YOU REMEMBER-- YOU MUST!

"...FROM THE PRINCE OF ALL *LIARS*."
ALEX?
MY GOD-- ARE YOU OKAY?
KOFF *KOFF*
CREED...?
ARE YOU GONNA MAKE ME PUT YOU IN A HOLD?
PIPE DOWN, CAGE...
AIN'T GOT A MURDEROUS THOUGHT IN MY HEAD--OR I'D *ALREADY* BE ON YOU.
AN' IF STARK'S SHIELD LEFT ME ALL HEROIC-LIKE--
--MEANS SUMMERS *AIN'T*.
ALEX--?! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!
GET BACK-- *GET THE HELL AWAY OR I'LL FRY HER HEAD OFF!*
ALEX, WHATEVER'S GOING ON-- *STOP*.
FOR KATIE'S SAKE--
KATIE NEVER EXISTED--THE SAME AS OUR LOVE. *NOW GET BACK!*
SHRINK US DOWN--GET US OUT OF HERE OR I'LL *KILL YOU*.
DON'T TEST ME, WOMAN.
STOP HIM!

IF ANY O YOU FOLLO SHE DIES
QUICKSILVER-- *GO!*
THEY'RE ALREADY GONE!
FIND THEM! HE *CAN'T* BE ALLOWED TO TAKE JANET!
I DETECT NOTHING--THEY ARE ALREADY *DEEP* WITHIN THE MICROVERSE.
I'M...I'M SORRY I COULDN'T STOP HIM, DAD.
YOU JUST GOT US THROUGH A WAR, SON.
MADE YOUR OLD MAN *PROUD.*
FOOLS--THIS IS NOT A TIME FOR CONGRATULATIONS!
OR HAVEN'T YOU NOTICED?
THEY'RE *GONE.*
STARK, DOOM *AND* THE RED SKULL...

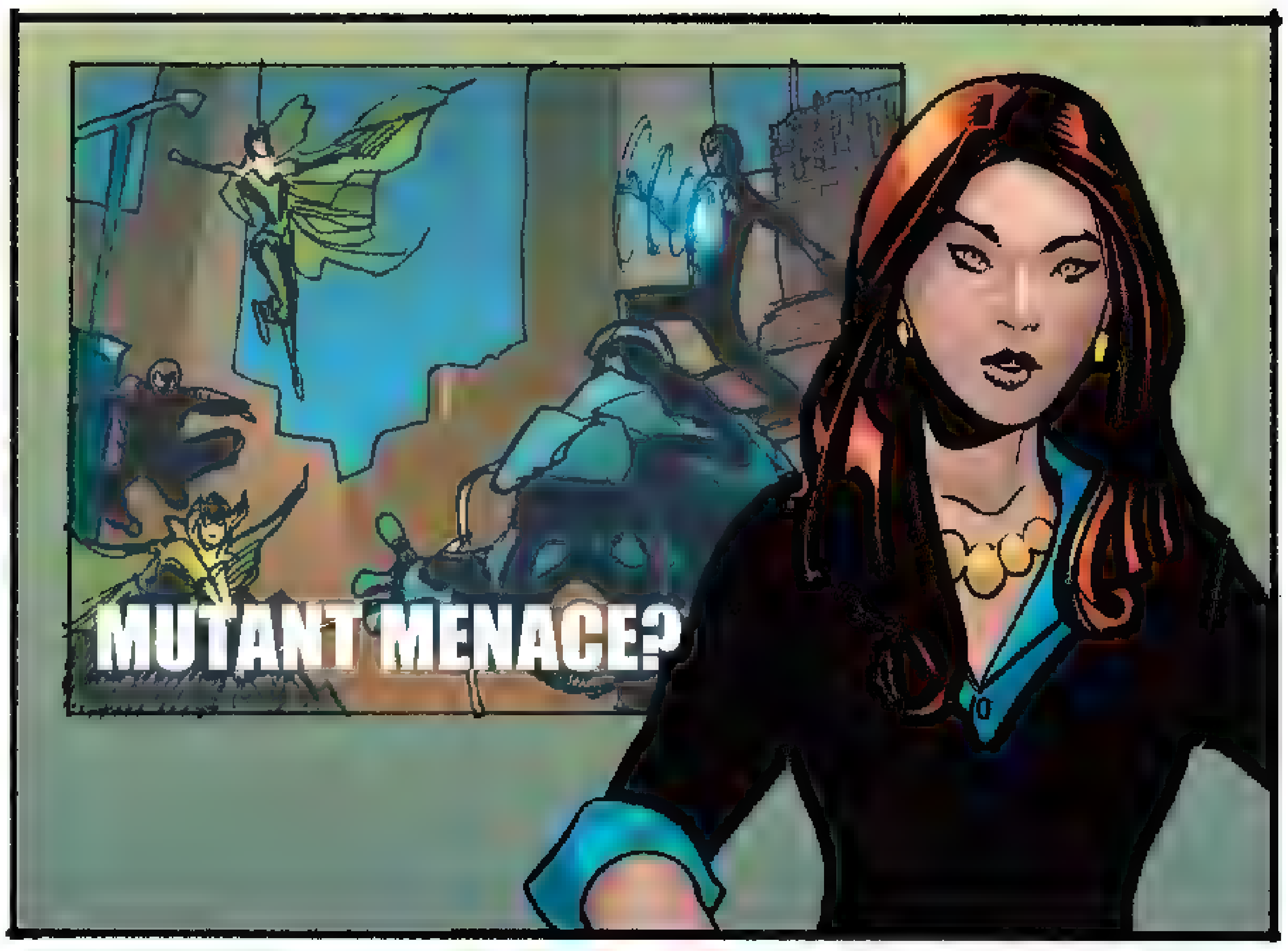
"...*YOU* LET THEM ESCAPE."


MUTANT MENACE?

--ONE WEEK AFTER THE ATTACK OF APOCALYPSE ON MANHATTAN, RECOVERY CREWS CONTINUE TO SIFT AND REBUILD.

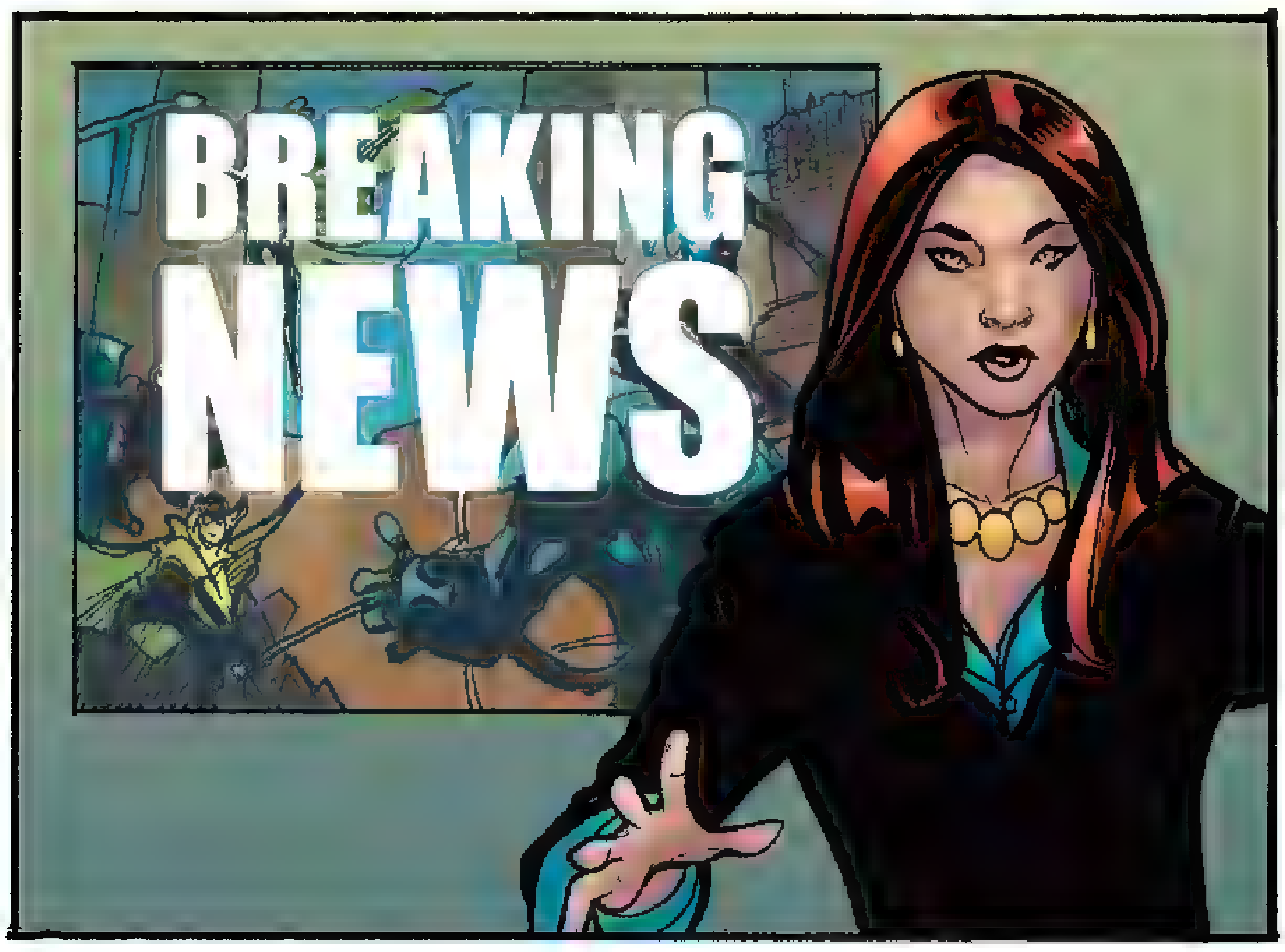
CITY PLANNERS SAY IT COULD TAKE UPWARDS OF A MONTH BEFORE THE CITY IS COMPLETELY UP AND RUNNING.

REPORTS FROM AVENGERS TOWER CONFIRM ALL THE HEROES WERE FREED FROM THE ANT FARM WHERE THEY WERE HELD PRISONER SINCE THE ATTACKS BEGAN.


MUTANT MENACE?

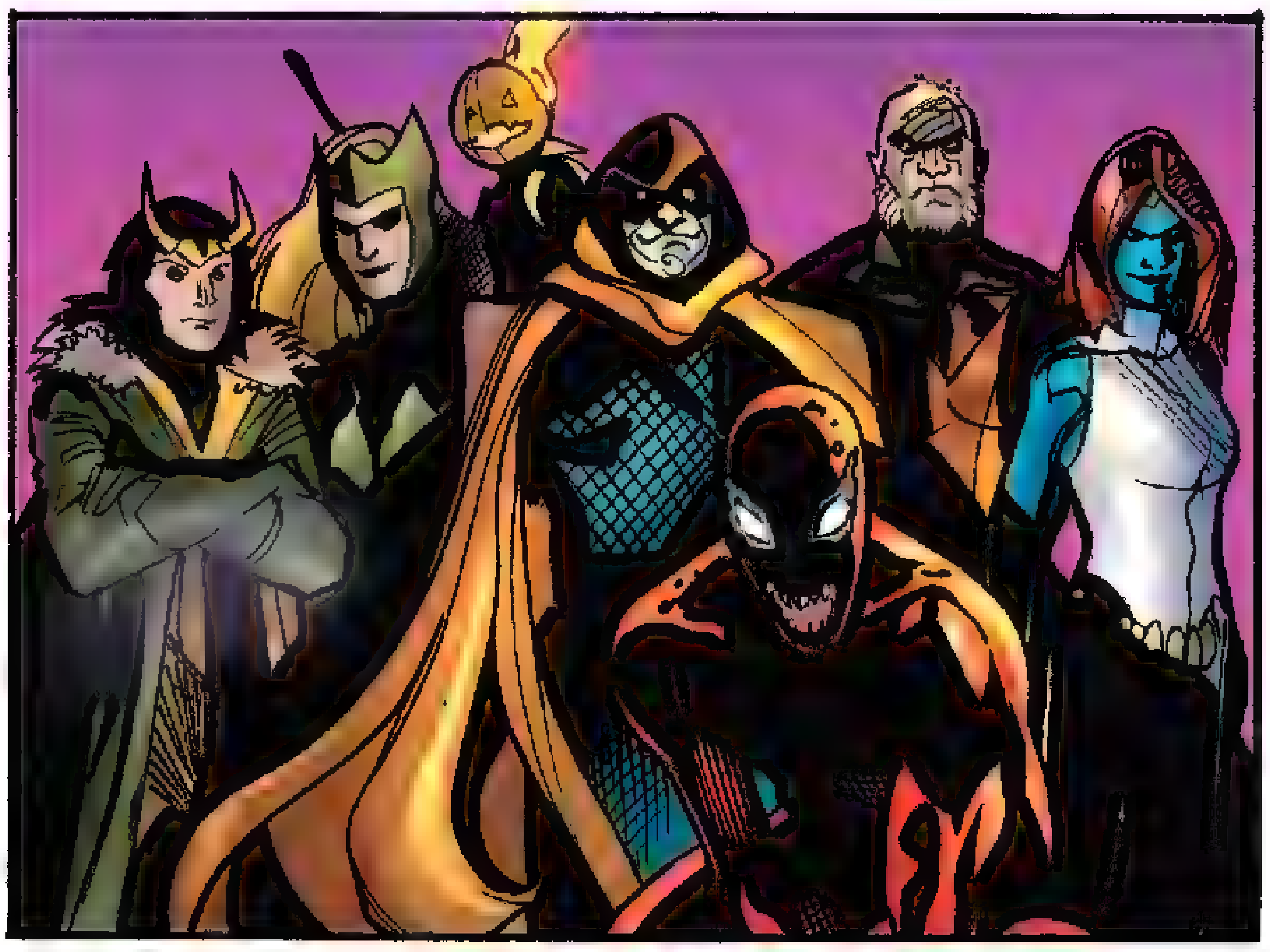
LITTLE IS KNOWN OF THE MAN WHO REFERRED TO HIMSELF AS "*APOCALYPSE*," THE MUTANT WHO ORDERED ALL HUMANS TO VACATE MANHATTAN UNDER THREAT OF EXECUTION.

HIS ARMY OF MUTANTS, HOWEVER, IS WELL KNOWN AS THE OUTLAW ***X-MEN***. BUT APPARENTLY THAT ISN'T THE ENTIRE STORY.



WE'VE RECEIVED THE FOLLOWING VIDEO...

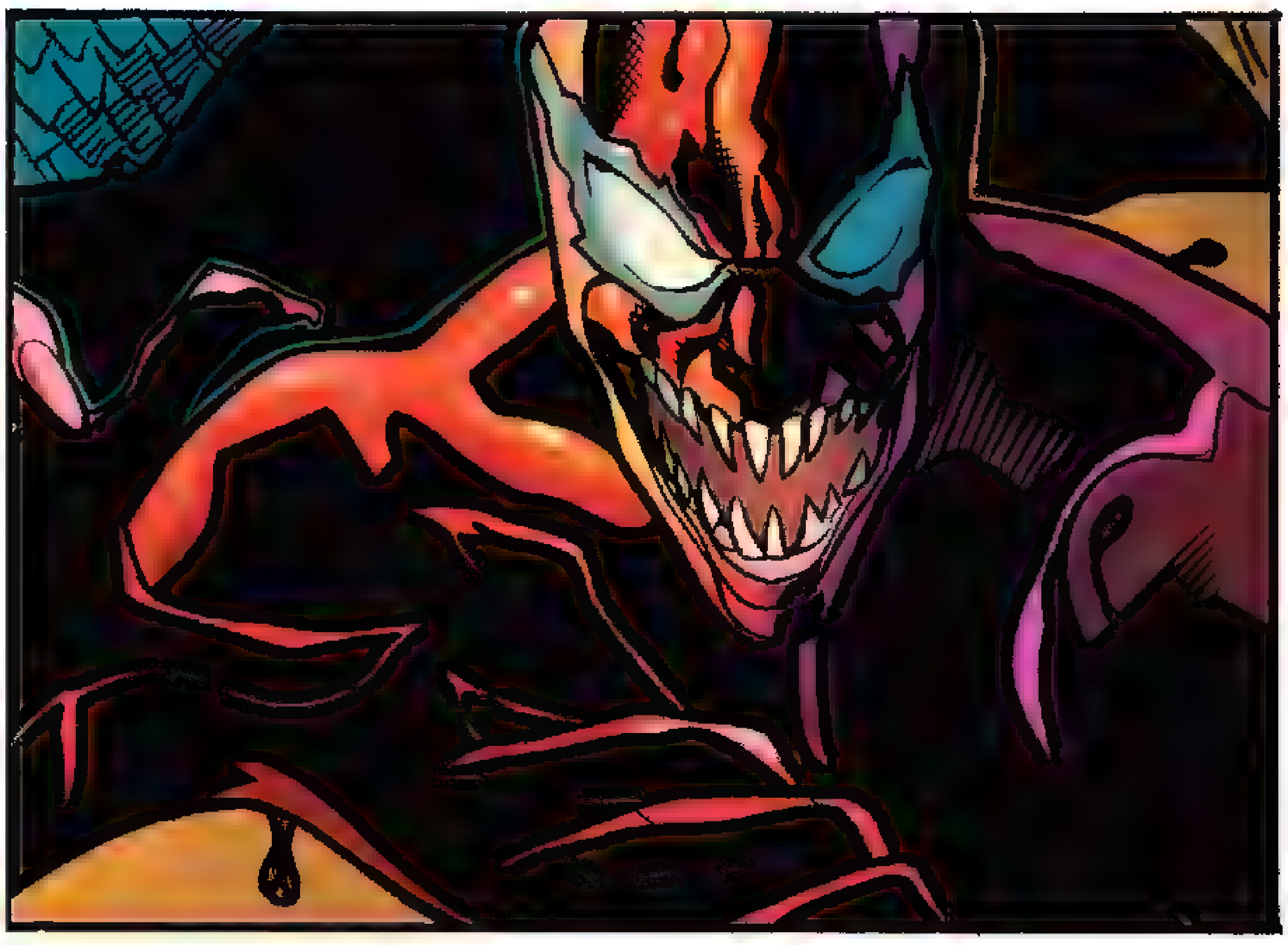
...MADE BY A VILLAINOUS GANG REFERRING TO THEMSELVES AS THE ***AXIS OF EVIL***, AND RECORDED EARLIER BEFORE THE NOW-FAMOUS BATTLE OF MANHATTAN.



HEY THERE, Y'ALL SUCKERS.

NAME'S ***CARNAGE***, USUALLY IF YOU SEE MY FACE, YER DAY'S ENDING ***PERMANENT***-STYLE.

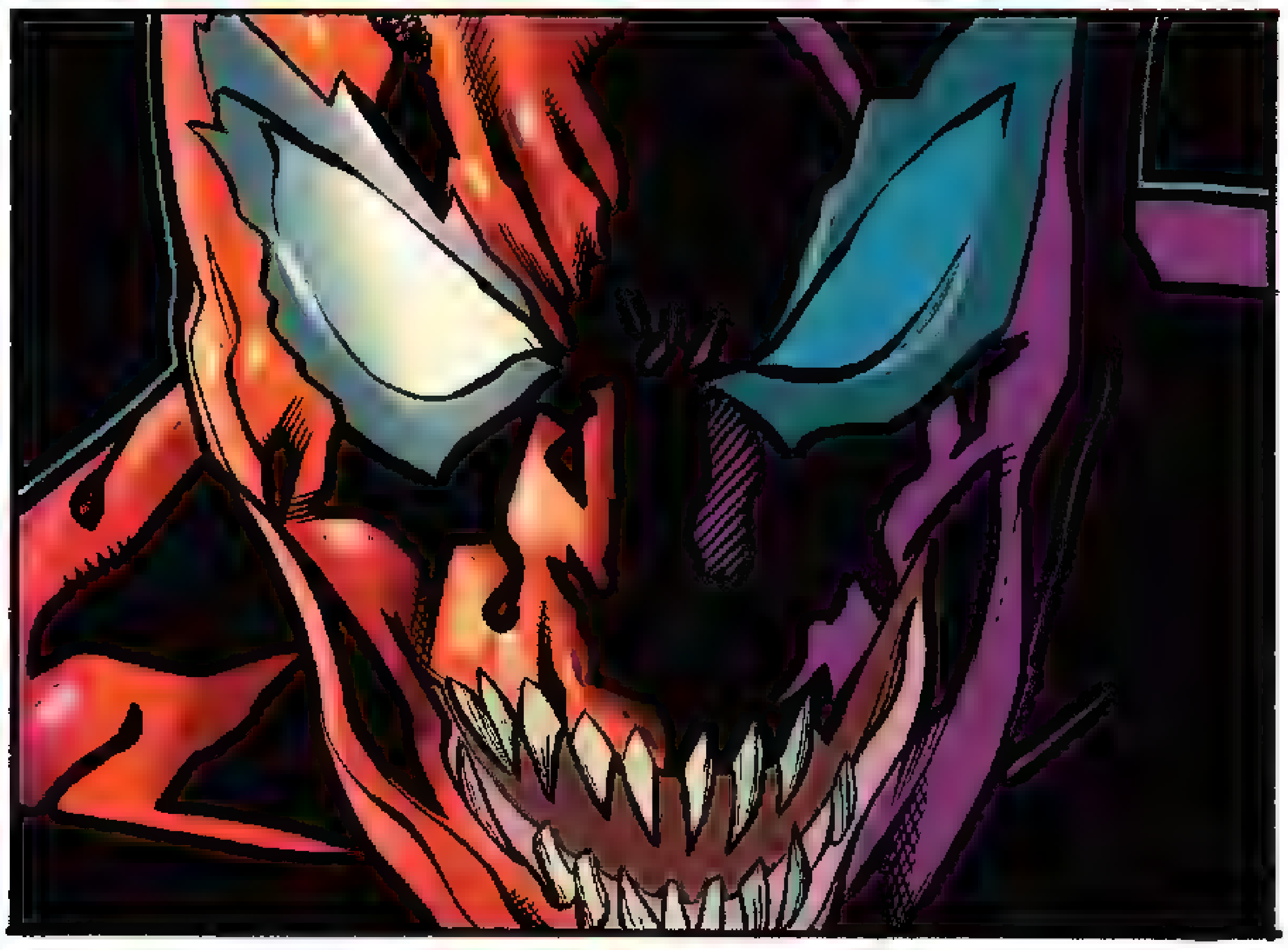
NOW, IF YER WATCHIN' THIS VIDEO, IT'S BECAUSE OUR BID TO STEAL OL' MANHATTAN'S FAILED.



SEE NOW, IT WAS OUR MISCHIEVOUS MACHINATIONS WHAT DONE MANIPULATED YER ***"HEROES."***

SWEET ENCHANTRESS' TRICKERY LED THE X-MEN TO JOINING APOCALYPSE. IDIOTS AIN'T GOT THAT KIND OF SENSE ON THEIR OWN. SHE DROVE THE AVENGERS A BIT NUTS TO BOOT.

WE DON'T LIKE THE IDEA ANY O' THEM DING-DONGS GETTIN' CREDIT FOR OUR WORK, SEE.



WE ARE THE AXIS OF EVIL.

THE WORLD GONNA QUAKE WHERE WE TREAD.

MAYBE SOME O' YOUR HERO-FOLKS GOT LUCKY--MAYBE WE BEEN DEFEATED--BUT KNOW THIS--

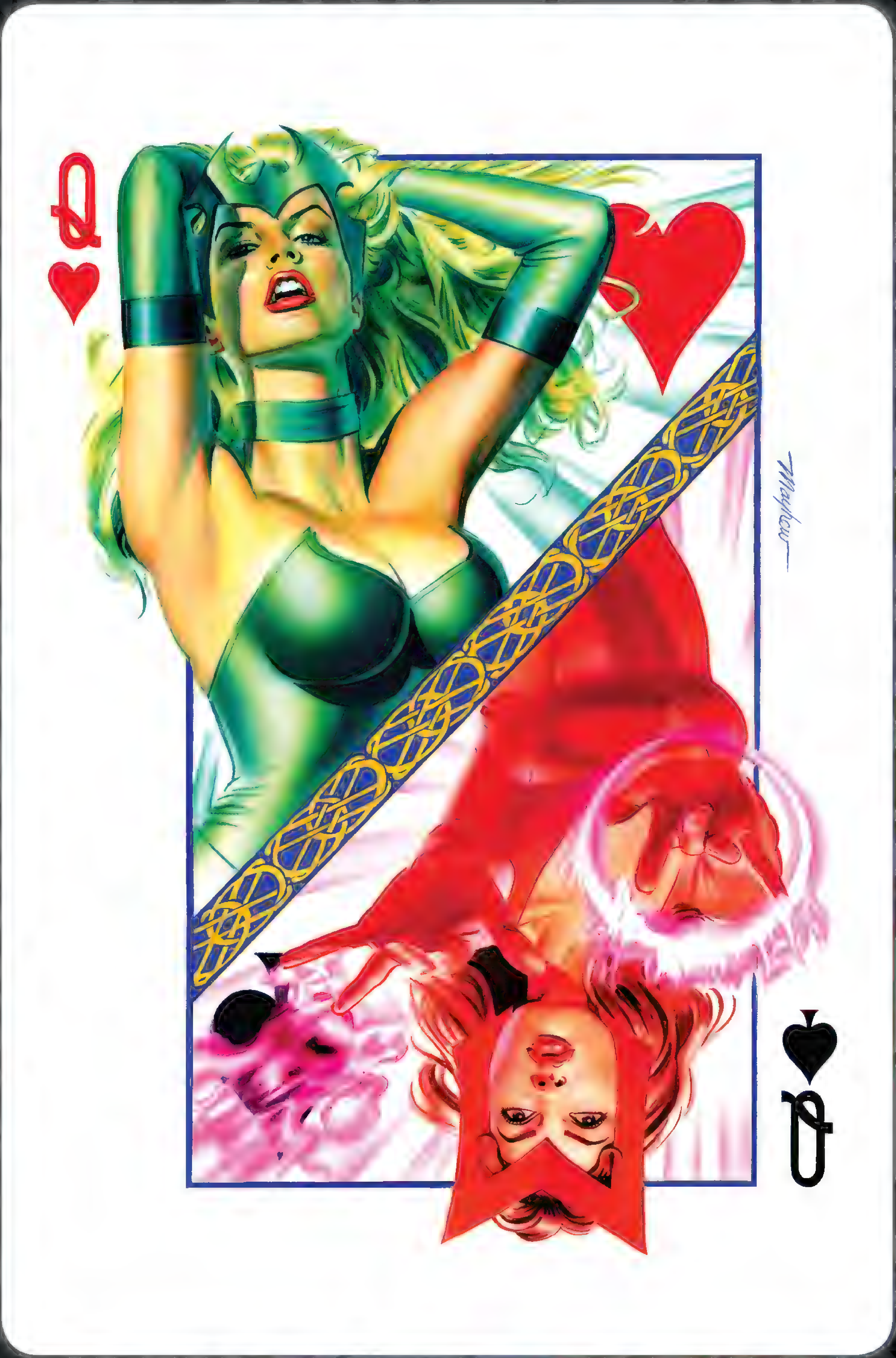
NEXT TIME WE ***WON'T*** BE.

X-MEN AN' AVENGERS'LL PAY FOR KIBOSHIN' OUR PLANS...
...AN' SOON Y'ALL GONNA BEND YER KNEES.
WHY? WHY WOULD THEY HAVE FILMED THIS, STEVE?
IF EVERYTHING YOU SAID IS TRUE, WHY WOULD THEY TAKE CREDIT FOR CRIMES THEY *DIDN'T* COMMIT?
AFTER EVERYTHING THAT HAPPENED, *SOMEONE* HAD TO.
CLIKK
IT WAS *THEIR* IDEA.
IT'S THE ONLY WAY THE WORLD WILL EVER FORGIVE AND TRUST THE AVENGERS AND X-MEN AGAIN.
AND THEY *KNEW* THAT.
SO...*NO ONE* ELSE WILL KNOW?
THEY MADE ME PROMISE I'D KEEP THE TRUTH A SECRET.
THAT'S THE SORT OF SACRIFICE A HERO MAKES...
"...THE KIND NO ONE KNOWS ABOUT."
Day One of this new stint.
Day One of wondering if I maybe got the short end.
Inverted permanent.

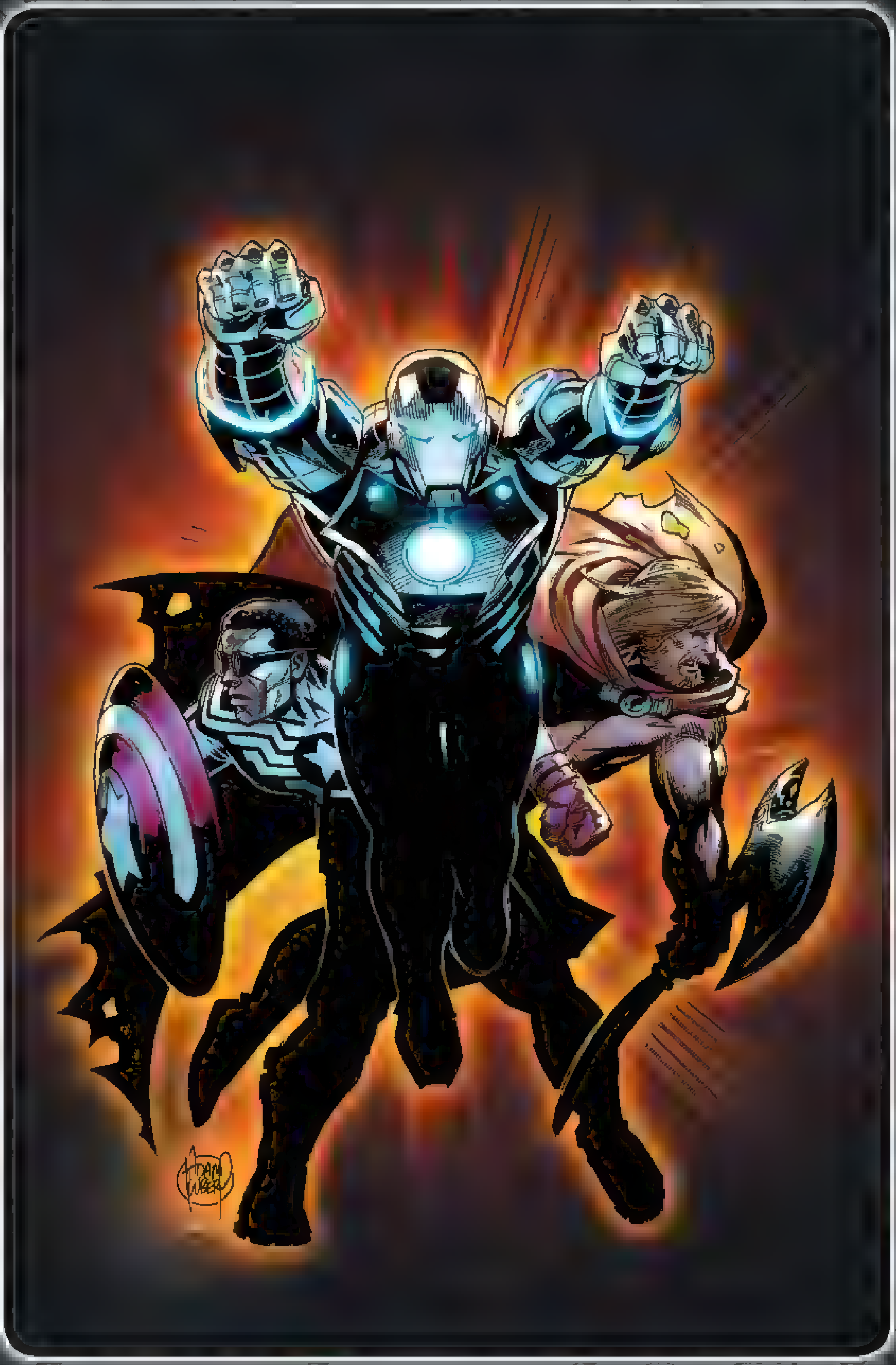
Sociopath cold was washed away by a strong sense of empathy.
Bad emotions welling up as memories flood.
Memories of the man I was--and the things I did.
Memories of murder.
Bodies twitching while I laughed.
While I tried to feel something.
Some of the others remain the same.
But most were reverted.
And the reverted can go back to being themselves.
Sink back into that comfortable old suit...
...into the grooves of familiar habit.
And me. Where once I only wanted to share my pain with the world--
--now I got a strong desire to help others do away with theirs.
The others back out there.
Back to their scheming and their heroing.

The same dance.
The same cycle.
NYPD
But finally one I see the need for.
Rotten people don't know they're rotten.
Never do.
Human mind can rationalize just about near anything.
People are self-centered at their core.
Down deep.
But it's hard to admit it.
Easier to cook up a story you live in.
One where you're the hero.
One where it doesn't matter how you get what you want--
--so long as you get it.
That's villainy.
That's the ugly thing that won't stop rising up in folks.
That's what I was, through and through.

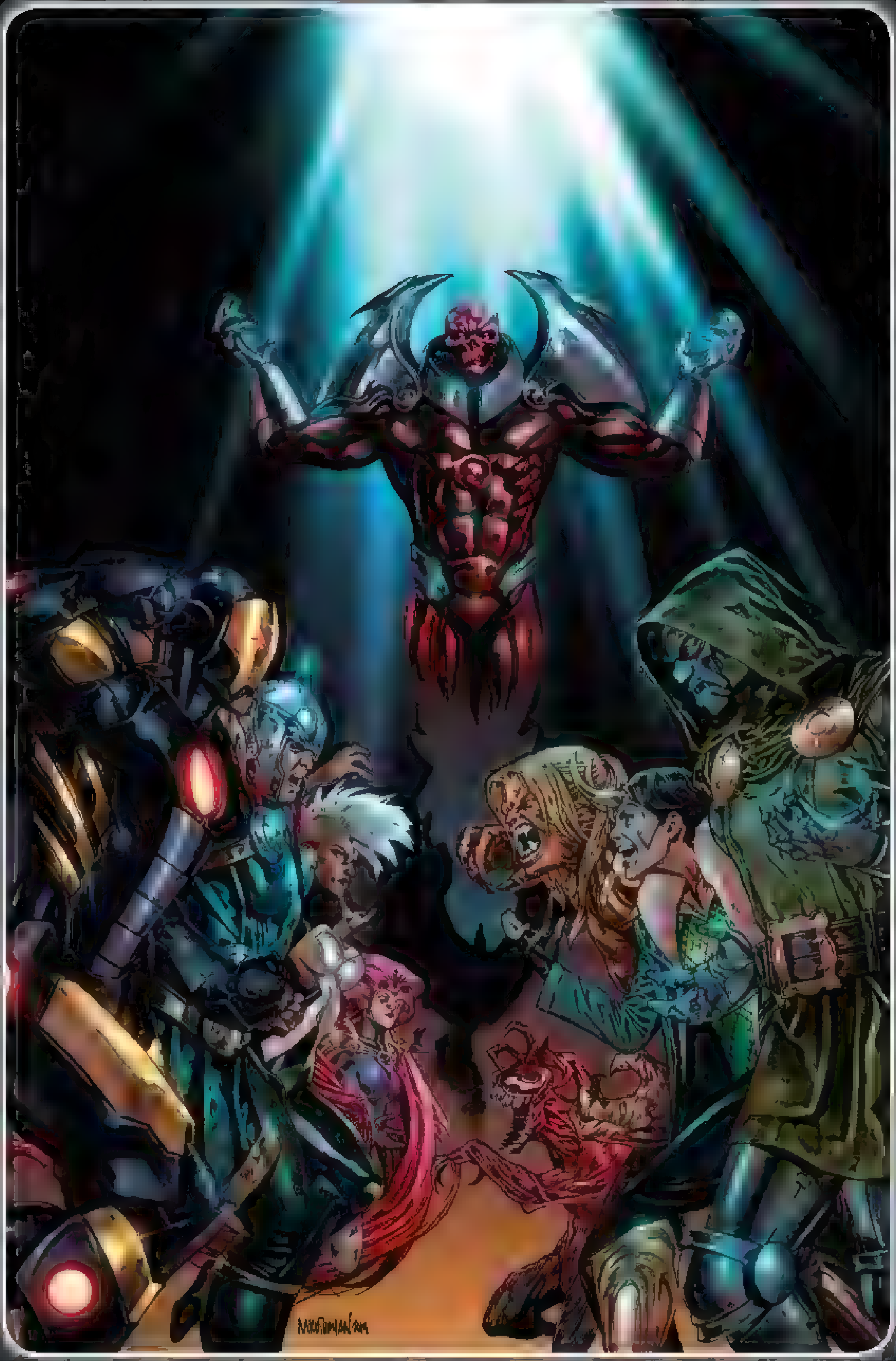
That's why we need the people who are strong enough to fight those self-serving urges.
--AND THE AVENGERS UNITY SQUAD WILL STAND TOGETHER.
BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN THE AVENGERS AND THE X-MEN TO ENSURE NOTHING LIKE THIS CAN ***EVER*** HAPPEN AGAIN.
To stand tall and set an example.
And folks inspired to live up to the example--
--that's how they really change the world.
RHINESTONE SCULPTURE...DAMN PARKER LUCK...CAN'T REMEMBER WHEN FOLLOWING THROUGH ON A PROMISE WAS SO HARD.
They inspire the rest of us by showing it's possible to be better.
But you knew that, Logan.
You pulled yourself up on your own and grew into something better.
Now it's my turn to see if I can find that spirit to overcome my past.
The heart to push through the glaring eyes that only see the beast I was.
You'll see, Logan.
I'll do it.
I'll find it.
Spirit of a Wolverine.
END.



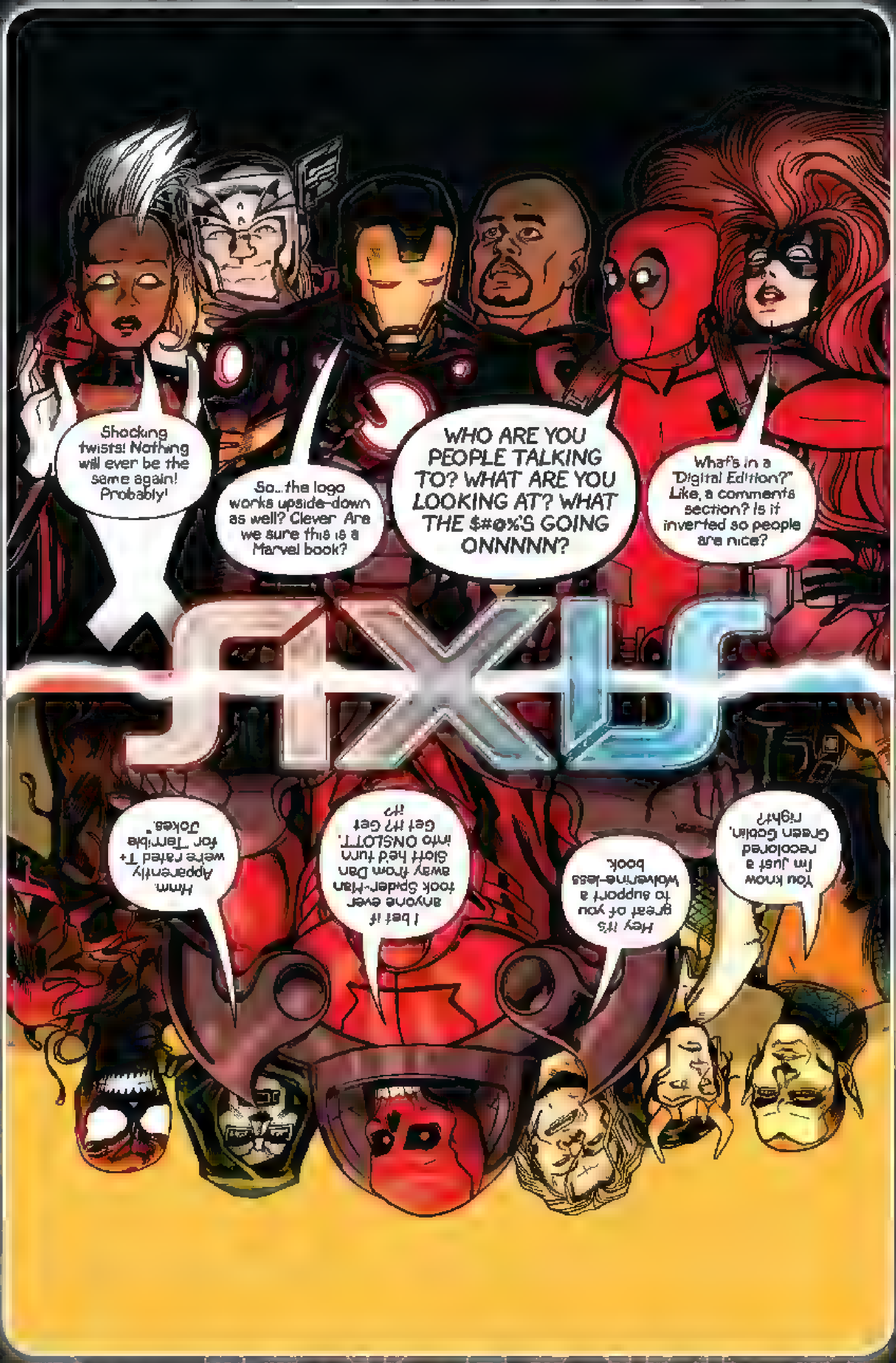
AXIS #1 VARIANT
BY MIKE MAYHEW



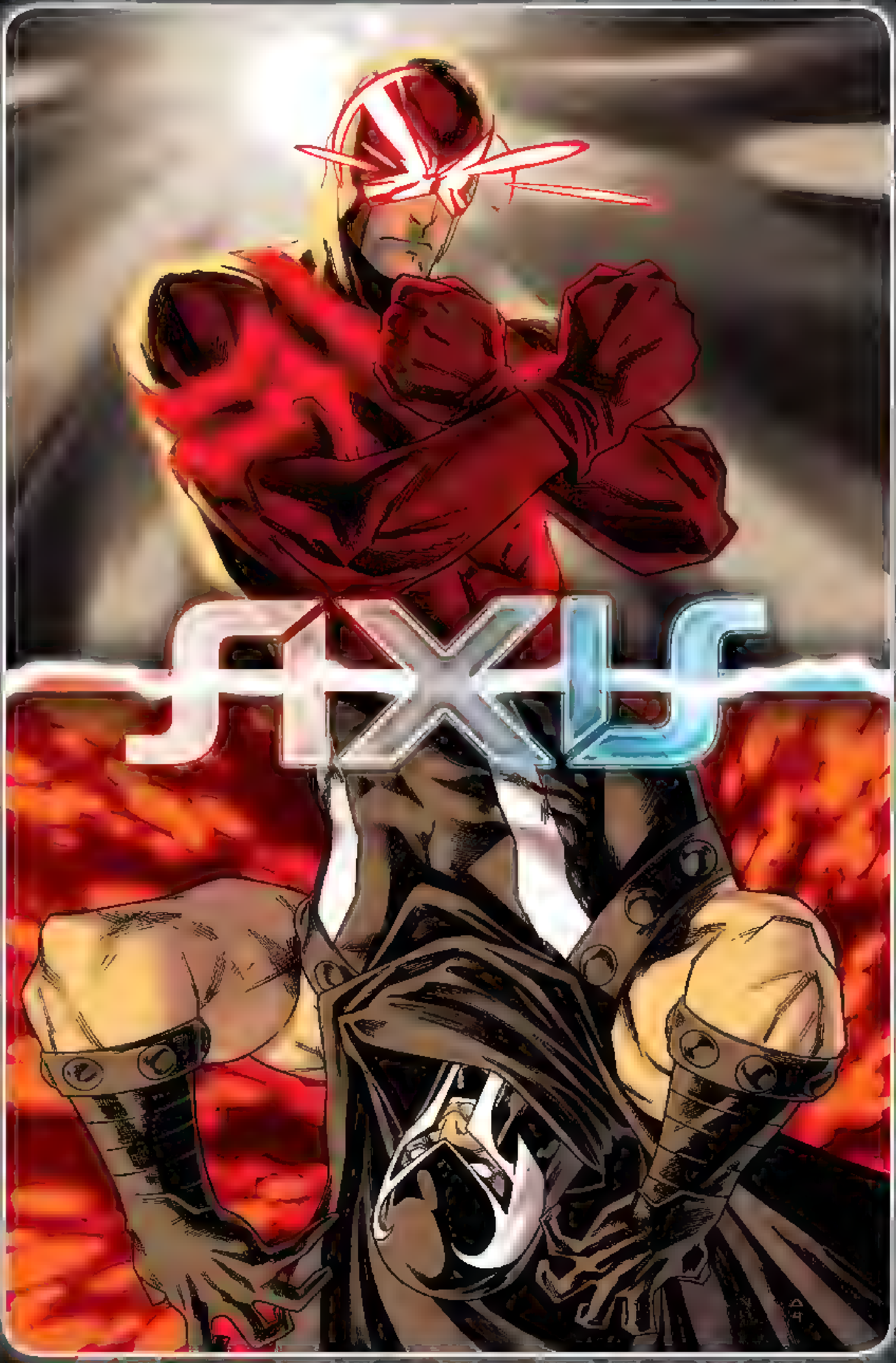
AXIS #1 DYNAMIC FORCES VARIANT
BY ADAM KUBERT & EDGAR DELGADO



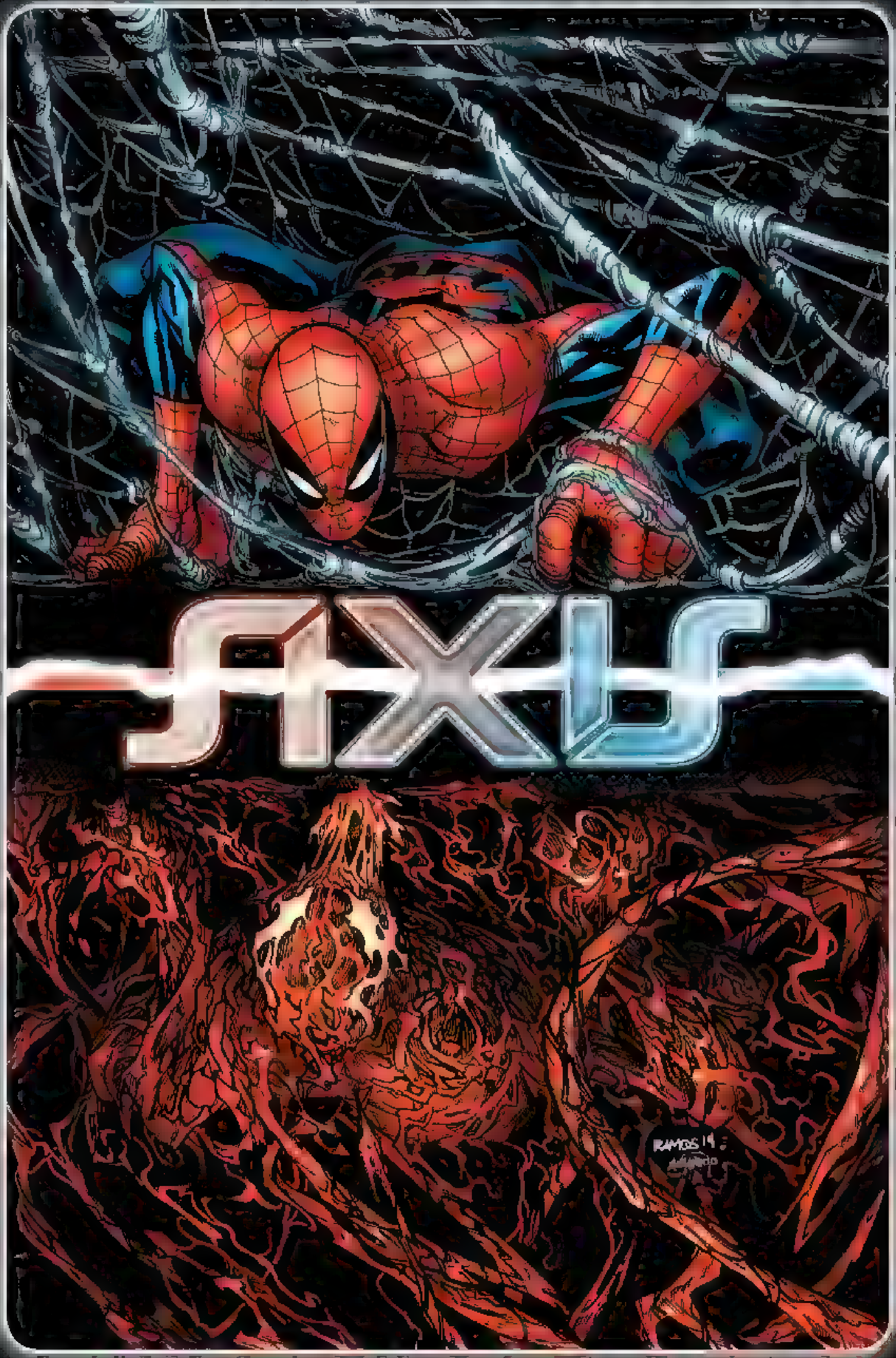
AXIS #1 HASTINGS VARIANT
BY MICO SUAYAN & CHRIS SOTOMAYOR


Shocking twists! Nothing will ever be the same again! Probably!
So...the logo works upside-down as well? Clever. Are we sure this is a Marvel book?
WHO ARE YOU PEOPLE TALKING TO? WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING AT? WHAT THE $#@%'S GOING ONNNNN?
What's in a "Digital Edition?" Like, a comments section? Is it inverted so people are nice?
AXIS
You know I'm just a recolored Green Goblin, right?
Hey it's great of you to support a Wolverine-less book.
I bet if anyone ever took Spider-Man away from Dan Slott he'd turn into ONSLOTT. Get it? Get it?
Hmm. Apparently were rated T+ for "Terrible Jokes."

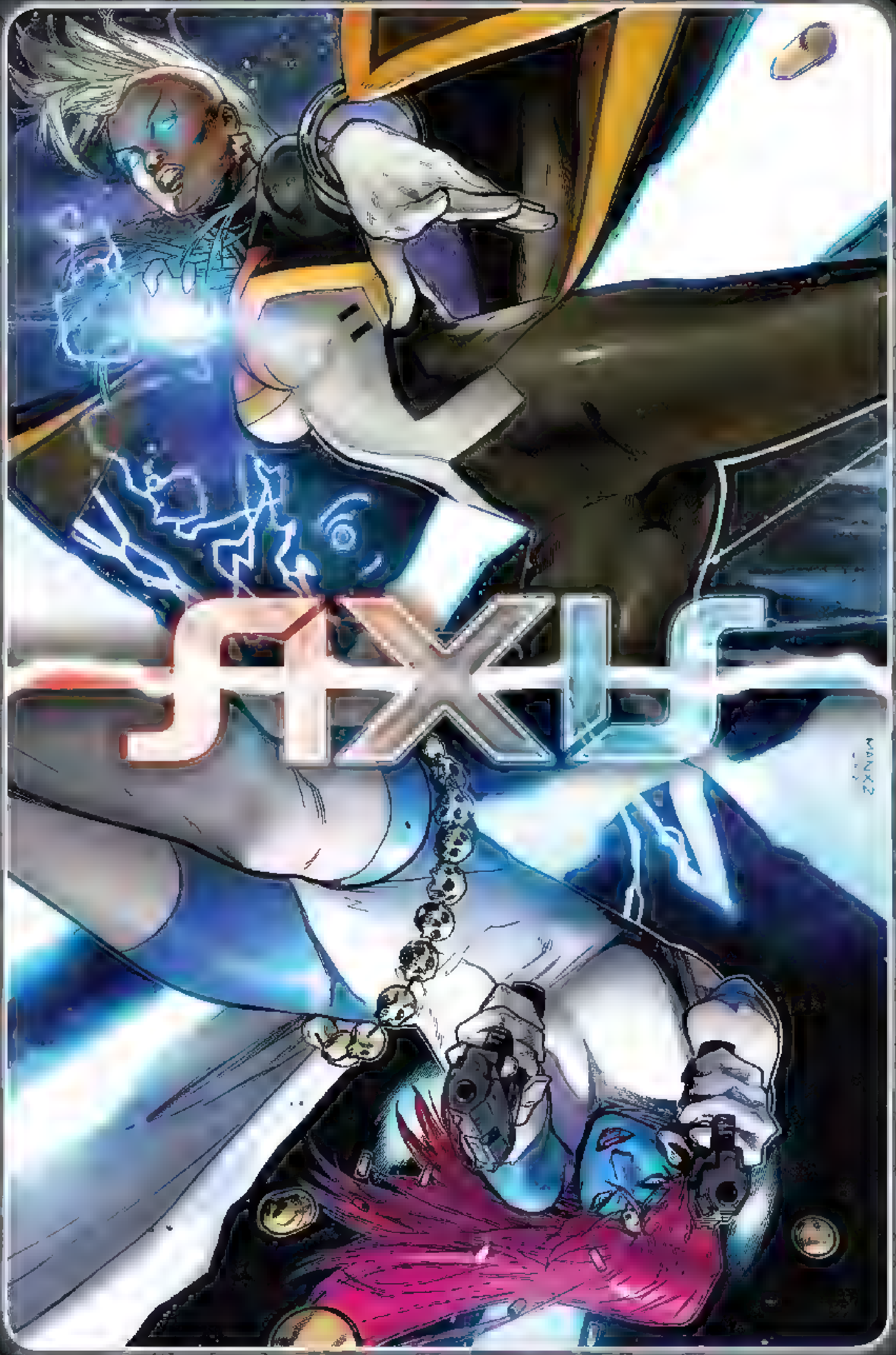
AXIS #1 DEADPOOL PARTY VARIANT
BY CHIP ZDARSKY



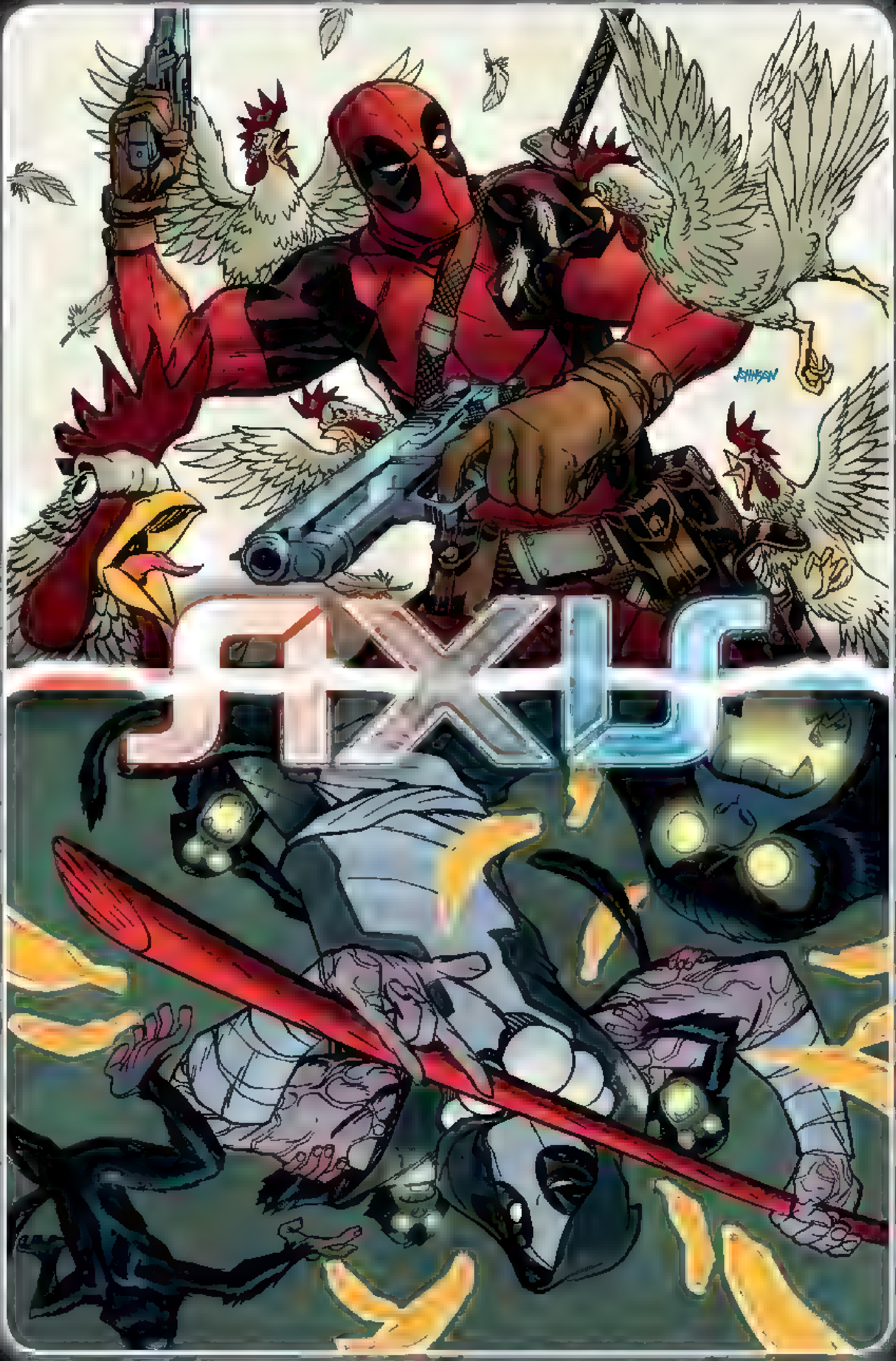
AXIS #2 INVERSION VARIANT
BY KRIS ANKA



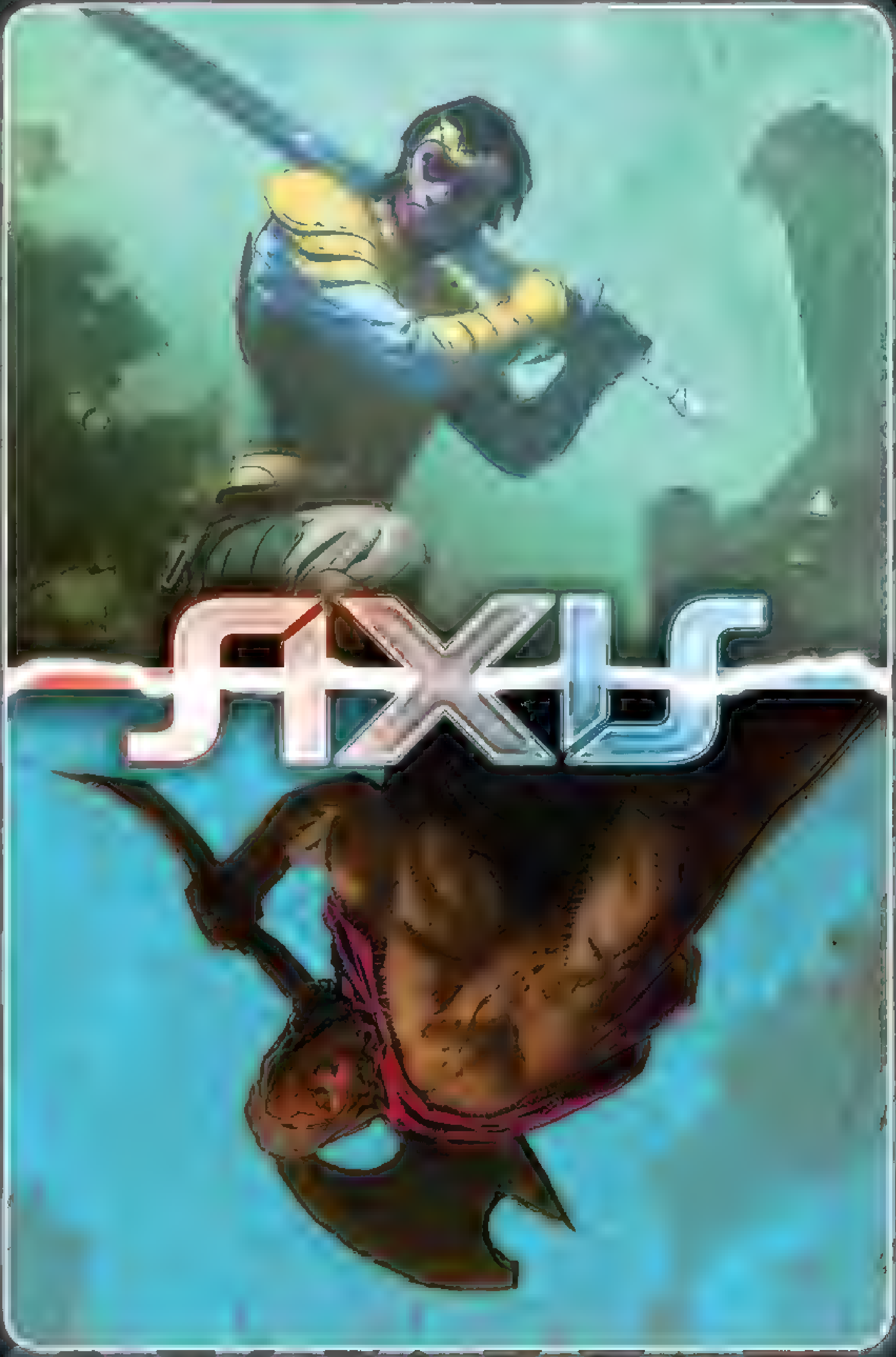
AXIS #3 INVERSION VARIANT
BY HUMBERTO RAMOS & EDGAR DELGADO



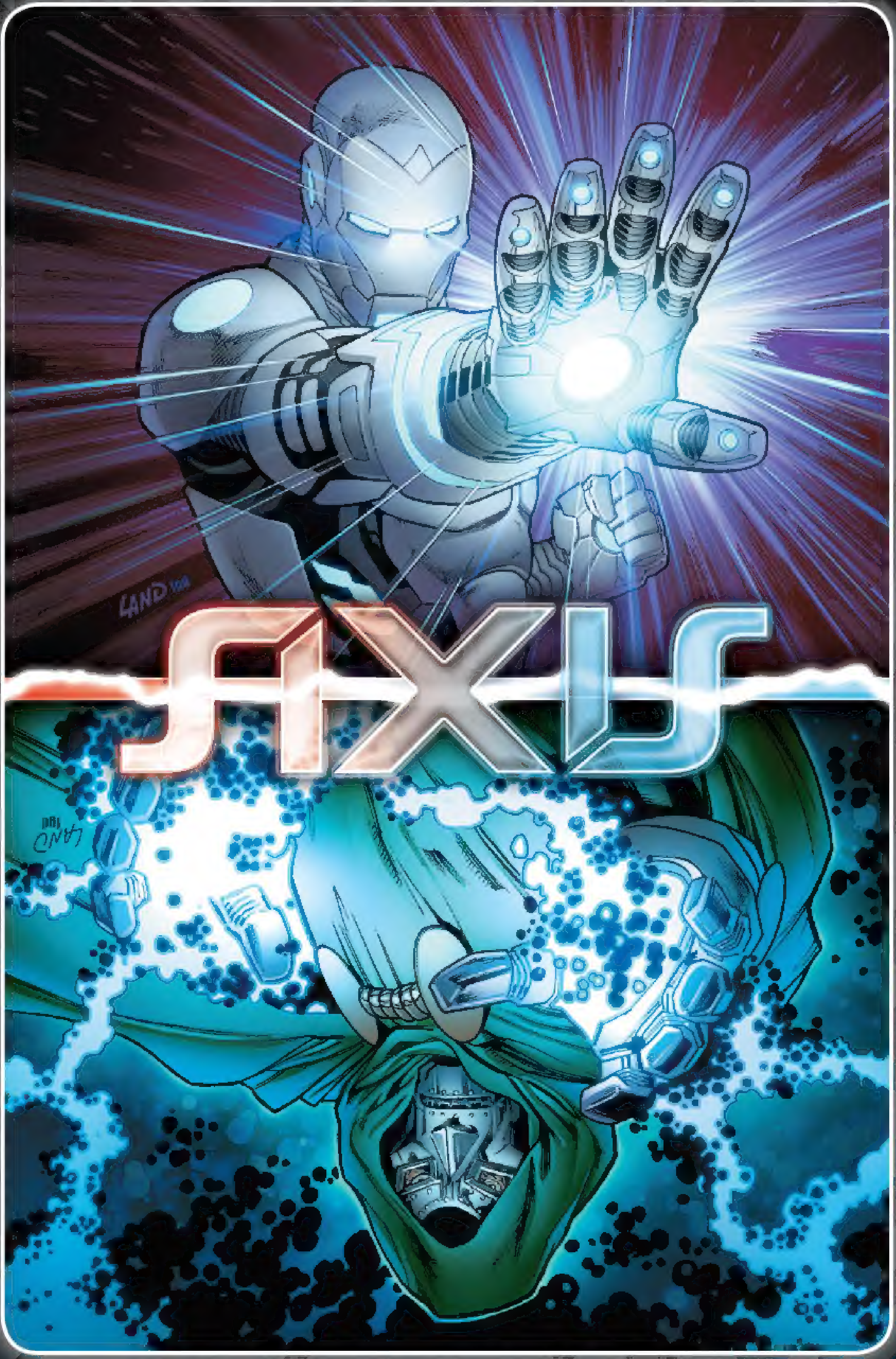
AXIS #4 INVERSION VARIANT
BY CLAY MANN, SETH MANN & DAVID CURIEL



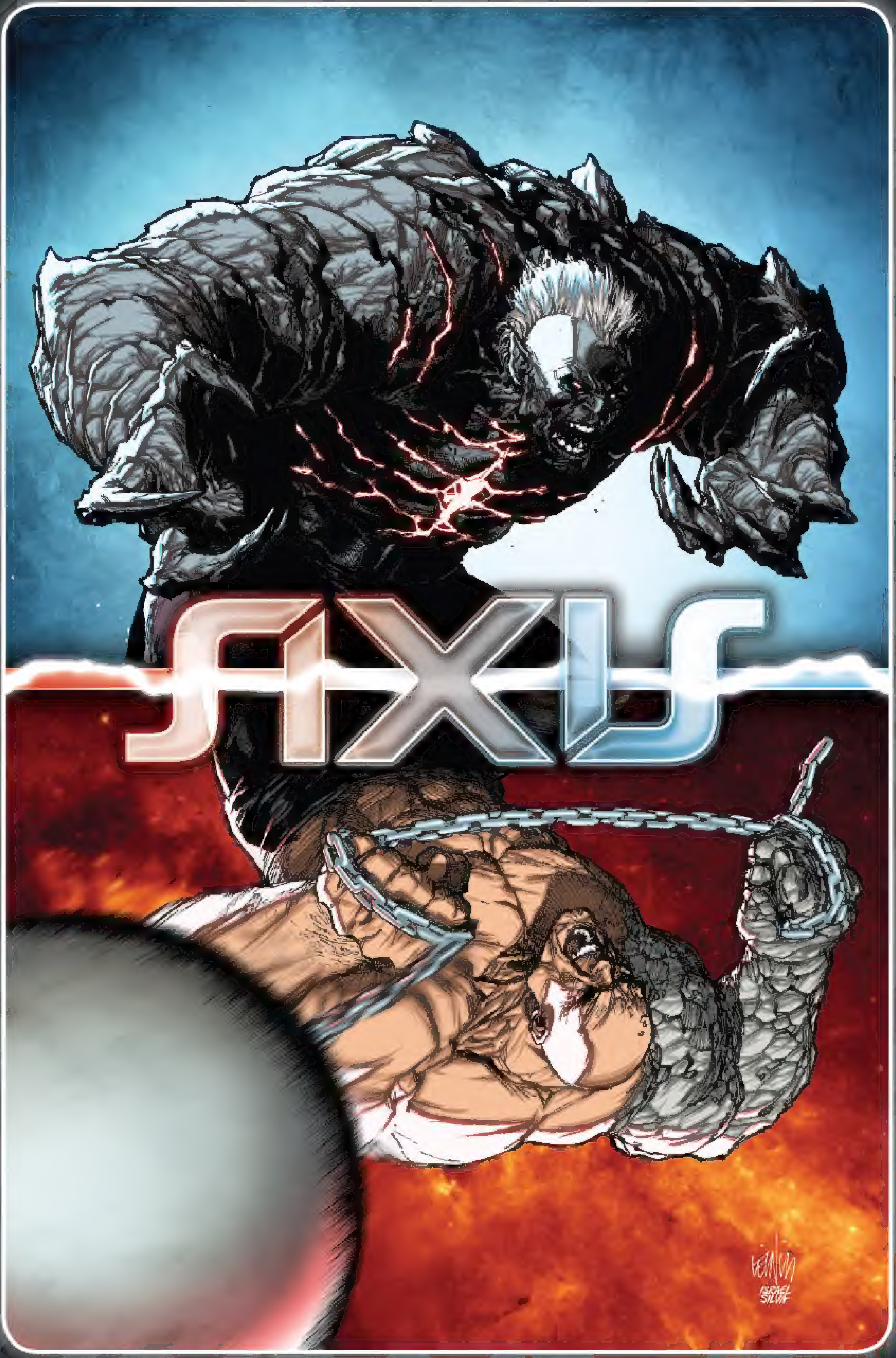
AXIS #5 INVERSION VARIANT
BY DAVE JOHNSON



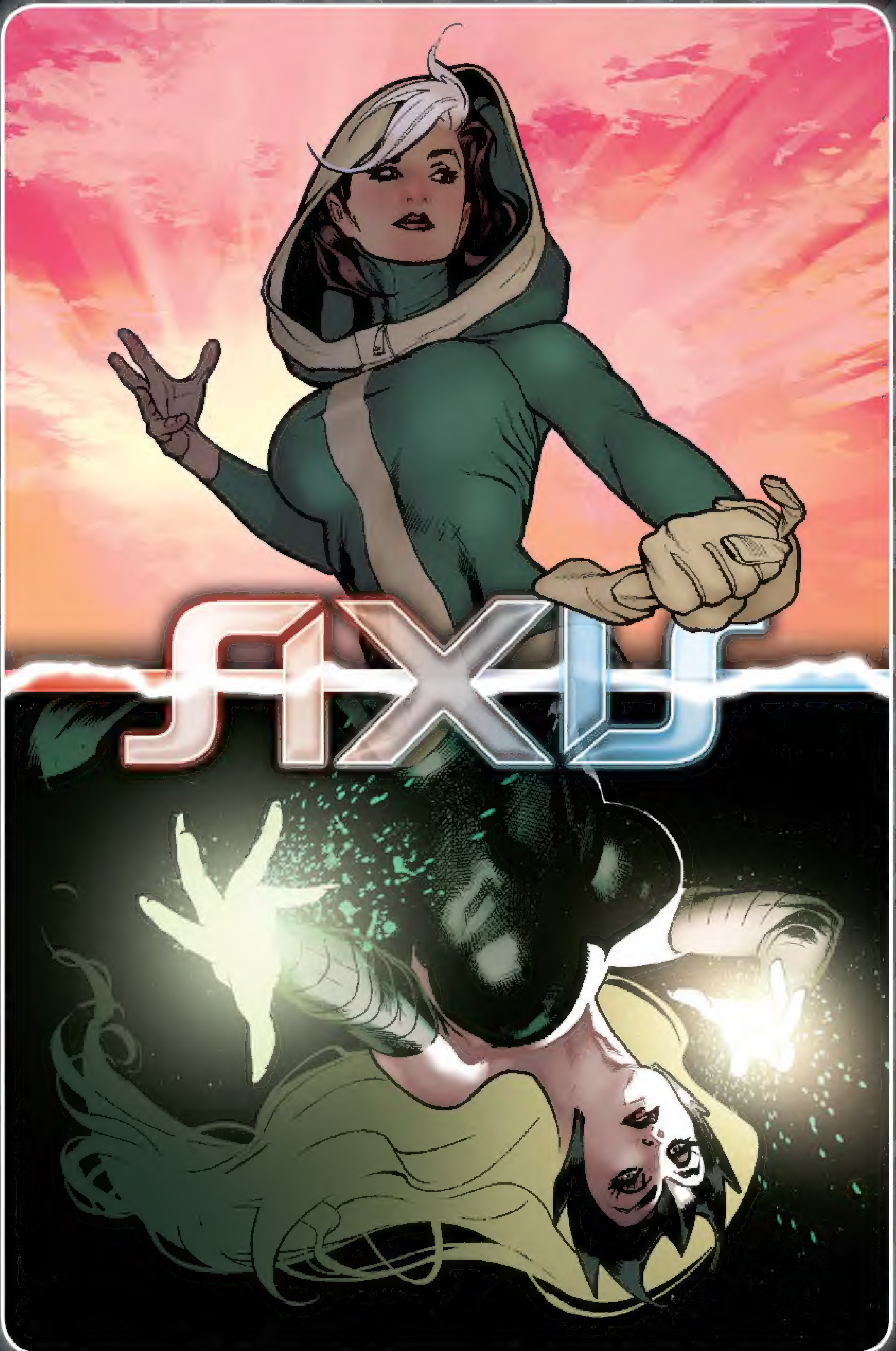
AXIS #6 INVERSION VARIANT
BY ESAD RIBIC



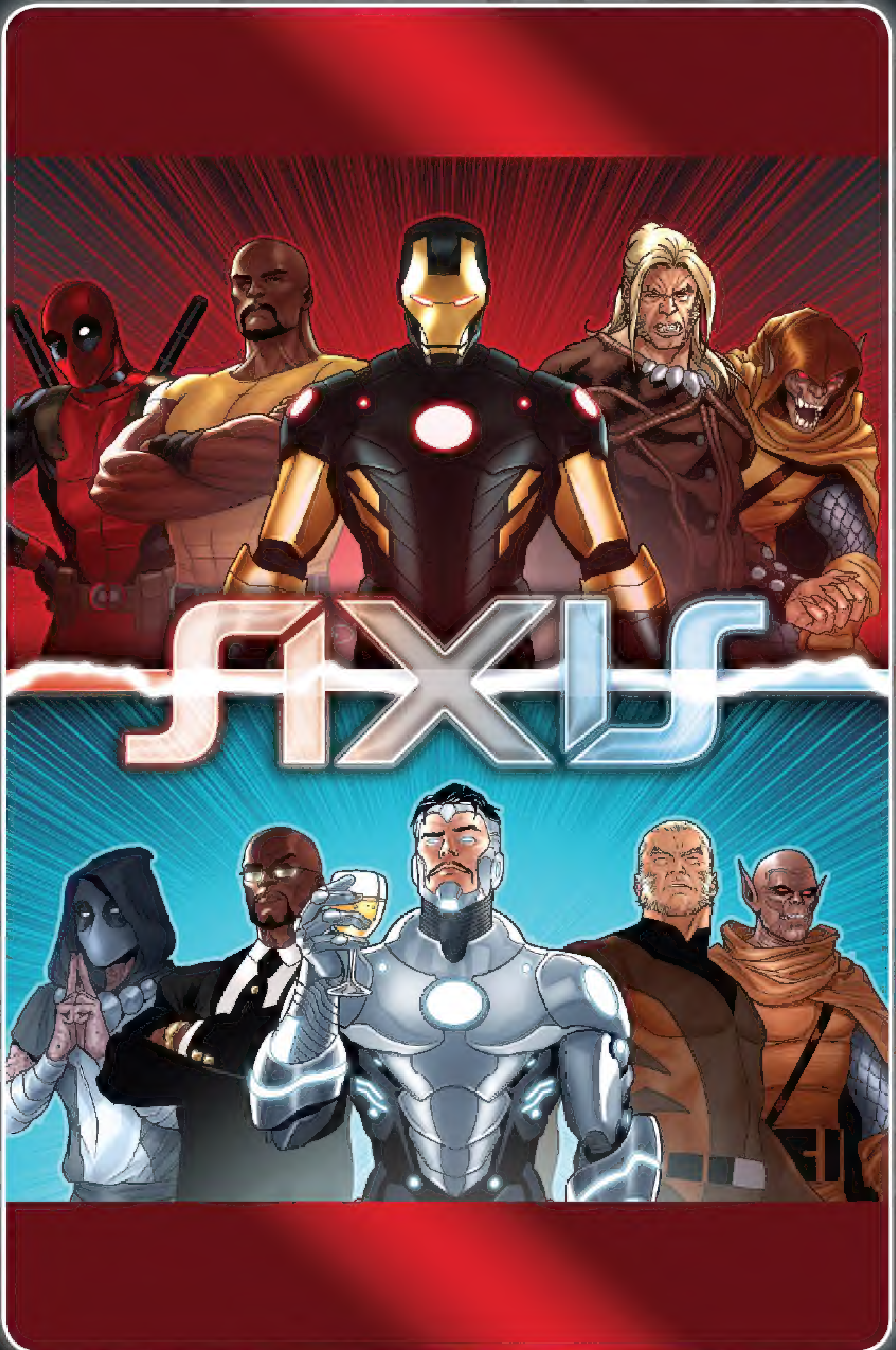
AXIS #7 INVERSION VARIANT
BY GREG LAND & FRANK D'ARMATA



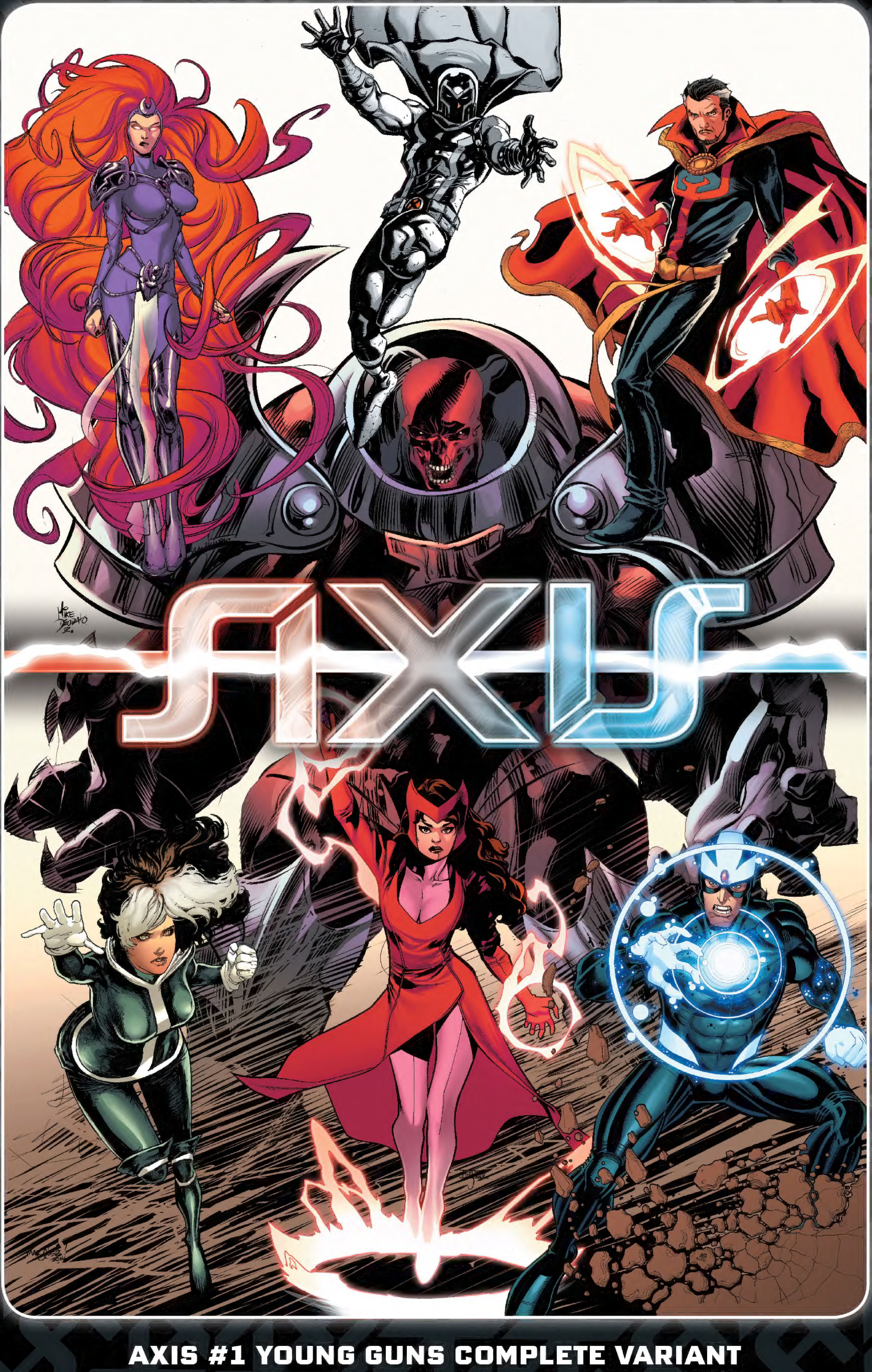
AXIS #8 INVERSION VARIANT
BY LEINIL FRANCIS YU & ISRAEL SILVA



AXIS #9 INVERSION VARIANT
BY ADAM HUGHES



AXIS #9 INVERSION VARIANT
BY PAUL RENAUD

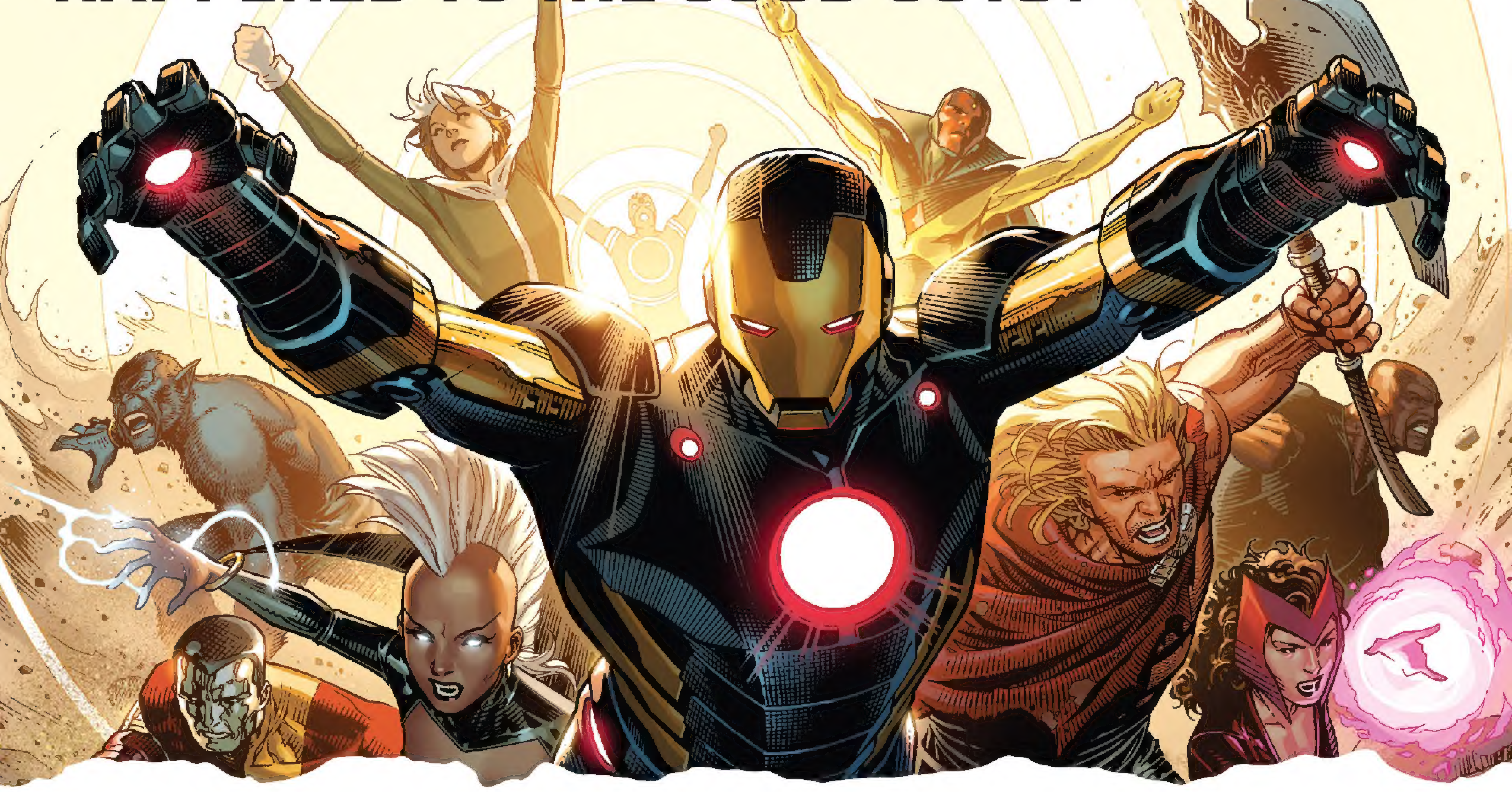


AXIS #1 YOUNG GUNS COMPLETE VARIANT

RED ONSLAUGHT BY MIKE DEODATO
SCARLET WITCH BY MAHMUD ASRAR
HAVOK BY NICK BRADSHAW
ROGUE BY DAVID MARQUEZ

MEDUSA BY SARAH PICHELLI
DR. STRANGE BY VALERIO SCHITI
MAGNETO BY RYAN STEGMAN
COLORS BY ISRAEL SILVA

BRING ON THE BAD GUYS! WHAT HAPPENED TO THE GOOD GUYS?



History's greatest monster is deadlier than ever. The Red Skull harnessed the power of Charles Xavier's brain, giving him all the skills of the world's greatest telepath. He sought to eradicate mutantkind. And a furious Magneto's attempt to kill him only unleashed something even worse — a Red Onslaught. Now this menace uses his awesome psionic prowess to spread bile and anger across Earth, unleashing World War Hate. Even the Avengers and X-Men working in unison will not be enough to stop him — not without a cavalry that is far more surprising. But defeating an Onslaught always comes at a cost — and this time, the price to be paid will be an uncanny Inversion! Good and evil mean little when the Friendly Neighborhood Carnage is swinging to the rescue, while Iron Man is acting all...Superior. The all-new Captain America takes charge, and woe betide any who stand in his way. Deadpool turns pacifist, swearing off violence — but the same can't be said for Kluh, the Hulk's Hulk! And as they declare war on humanity, the reunited X-Men risk bringing about Apocalypse! If that weren't worrying enough, the role-swapping heroes and villains should consider one question: When did the Red Skull ever stay down for long?

Collecting *Avengers & X-Men: Axis* #1-9 — written by Rick Remender; and illustrated by Adam Kubert, Leinil Francis Yu, Terry Dodson and Jim Cheung.

EMBRACE CHANGE AS THE MARVEL UNIVERSE IS TURNED ON ITS AXIS!
JC · VI · MMXIV

T+

ZONE